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HALF A MILLION OF MONEY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BARBARA'S HISTORY."

CHAPTER XXV. OLIMPIA COLONNA.

SAXON found the Earl waiting for him at the Sedgebrook station, with a plain phaeton, and a long-limbed, bony, black mare, that looked somewhat viciously askance at the new comer, and would evidently not have consented to stand still for a moment, were it not for the groom at her head.

"That's right, Trefalden," said Castletowers, as Saxon emerged from the station with his gun-case in his hand, and his rug over his shoulder. "Your train's a quarter after time, and the mare has been giving herself as many airs as a spoiled beauty. Jump up, my dear fellow, and let me tell you how glad I am to see you. Brought any horses?"

"Yes, two—since you insisted that I should do so. Here they come."

The Earl turned and glanced at the thoroughbreds, which were now being led down in a travelling costume that left nothing of them visible save their hoofs and their eyes.

"They're as welcome as yourself—if that's not a bad compliment," said he. "I've sent a light cart for your luggage, and my man shall follow with your groom; to show him the way. It's only a couple of miles to the park gates. Anything else?"

There was nothing else; so the groom stepped back, and the mare shook her ears, and went away down the road as if she had been shot from a catapult.

"I am delighted you've brought those horses, Trefalden," said the Earl, as they flew along between the green hedgerows of the pleasant country road, "for I have really nothing to mount you upon. I have given over the only beast in the stables fit to ride, for Miss Colonna's sole use and benefit, as long as she remains at Castletowers."

"Miss Colonna!" echoed Saxon.

"A lady who is visiting us," replied the Earl, explanatorily. "You have heard of her father, no doubt—Giulio Colonna, the great Italian patriot. He is staying with us also."

"Yes, I have heard of him," said Saxon, who had turned very red, and begun to wish himself back again in London.

"He is my mother's oldest friend," continued Castletowers, "and mine too. I don't know what you may have heard of him—few public characters have ever had so many enemies, or so many friends—but you must be prepared to like him, Trefalden, for my sake. You may not take to him at first. He is eccentric, absent, somewhat cold; but a man of antique virtue—a man whose grand simplicity is as much out of place in the nineteenth century as Cincinnatus himself would be out of place in a modern drawing-room."

Saxon thought of the twenty francs that Signor Colonna had offered him at Reichenau, and did not kindle at this description, as his friend had anticipated.

"I have heard nothing to his disadvantage," he said, with some constraint. "Is Major Vaughan still with you?"

"Yes, and Burgoyne comes down to-morrow for a week's shooting. We intend to be quite gay while you are all here."

"What do you mean by 'quite gay'?"

"Well, my mother gives a dinner-party to-morrow, and an evening-party on Saturday; and on Thursday the last meet of the season will be held in our grounds. Then, on Monday, the officers of the Forty-second, now quartered at Guildford, give a great ball, to which our guests are, of course, invited—and so runs the programme, with little variation. It is monotonous; but what can one do at a distance of thirty miles from London?"

"Lead the happiest life in the world, I should think," replied Saxon.

"It is a question of taste and means," said the Earl, with a sigh. "A motif of field-sports, set to an everlasting ritornella of dining and dancing, dancing and dining—that is life in an English country-house. For myself, I prefer the harsher music of a military band."

"Do you mean that you wish to go into the army?"

"I mean, that I should like to be a soldier, if my sword and my sympathies could go together; but that they never can, so it's of no use to think about it. Do you see that belt of pines straight ahead, and the green slope beyond, sprinkled over with elms? That's Castletowers. The house will come into sight directly, at the turn of the road."

And then the conversation strayed to other topics, and Saxon told his friend how William

Trefalden was coming down on Thursday; and by that time they had reached the park gates, and were driving up to the beautiful old red house, which looked as if dyed in the sunsets of many centuries.

Then the Earl took his guest round to the stables, built on the princely scale of the old Elizabethan days, and now more than three parts empty. Here Saxon saw the stalls set apart for his two thorough-breds; and presently Major Vaughan came into the yard, white with dust, leading his own beautiful Arabian, Gulanare, and followed by a docile bay, carrying a lady's saddle; and Saxon found that he had been riding with Mademoiselle Colonna.

After this, they strolled about the gardens, and the Earl initiated Saxon into the topography of the smoking-room, the billiard-room, and all that part of the house called the bachelors' quarters. Then the gong was sounded, and it was time to dress for dinner.

It was Saxon's first entry into the society of ladies; and this fact, coupled with his reluctance to meet the Colonnas, made him somewhat nervous on going into the drawing-room. The ladies, however, were not yet down; and he found only a group of four men standing round the fire. Two of these were Castletowers and Major Vaughan; the third he at once recognised for the dark-eyed Italian whom he had seen at Reichenau; and the fourth was a stranger.

"My friend, Mr. Saxon Trefalden—Signor Colonna—the Reverend Edwin Armstrong," said Lord Castletowers, getting through the introductions as quickly as he could.

The clergyman bowed somewhat stiffly; but Signor Colonna held out his hand.

"Gervase's friends are mine," he said, with a smile of singular sweetness. "I have heard much of you, Mr. Trefalden, and rejoice to know you. Is this your first visit to Castletowers?"

It was evident that he had no more remembrance of Saxon, than Saxon had of the world before the Flood.

At this moment, the ladies came in. The Earl, with some ceremony, presented his young friend to his mother, and while Saxon was yet bending over her fair hand, dinner was announced. The Earl immediately gave his arm to Mademoiselle Colonna, Signor Colonna took Lady Castletowers, and the rest followed. Thus it happened that the introduction which Saxon most dreaded was altogether omitted, and that he did not even see Mademoiselle Colonna's face till he had taken his seat at the dining-table. He then looked up, and, to his intense discomposure, found her superb eyes turned full upon himself.

"My vis-à-vis is, I suppose, your young millionaire?" she said presently to Lord Castletowers. "I have met him before; but I cannot remember where."

The Earl laughed, and shook his head.

"Impossible," he replied. "He has only been six or eight weeks in England, and during the whole of that time you have not been up in town, I think, for a single day."

"But I may have met him abroad—perhaps at Milan?"

"He has never visited Italy in his life."

"Well, then, in Paris?"

"And I know that he has never been in Paris. In fact, it is more than improbable that you can have seen him before this evening. I speak thus positively, because I know all the story of his life up to this time; and a very curious story it is."

"You must tell it to me," said Mademoiselle Colonna.

"I will, by-and-by; and when you have heard it, you will grant that you are only misled by some accidental resemblance."

Mademoiselle Colonna looked at Saxon again. He was talking to Lady Castletowers, and she could scrutinise his features at her leisure.

"I do not think I shall make any such concession to your narrative powers," she said. "The more closely I look at him, the more convinced I am that we have not only met, but spoken—and not very long since, either. Why, I recognise the very inflections of his voice."

"Nay, madam, I claim to be a Swiss," Saxon was saying. "I was born in Switzerland, and so were my father and grandfather before me."

"But Trefalden is not a Swiss name," said Lady Castletowers.

"No, Trefalden is a Cornish name. We are of Cornish descent."

The colour flew to Olympia Colonna's face at the discovery conveyed to her by these few words.

"I knew it was no accidental resemblance," she said, with a troubled look. "I remember all about him now, and he remembers me. I knew he did—I saw it in his face."

"Then you really have met before?"

"Yes, in Switzerland, a few weeks ago. I—I was so unobservant as to mistake him for an ordinary peasant, and I—that is to say, we—offended him cruelly. My father has forgotten all about it; but I shall tender him a formal apology by-and-by. I hope he will forgive me."

"Forgive you!" echoed the Earl, in a low, passionate tone.

But Miss Colonna did not seem to hear him.

Later in the evening, when the little party was dispersed about the drawing-room, she turned to Saxon, who was inspecting some engravings on a side-table, and said:

"If it were not that oblivion and pardon are thought to go hand in hand, I should ask to be remembered by Mr. Trefalden. As it is, I can only hope that he has forgotten me."

Saxon bowed profoundly.

"I should be much concerned for my memory, madam," he replied, "if that were possible." She looked at him inquiringly.

"Is that a sarcasm," said she, "or a compliment?"

"I did not mean it for either."

"What is it, then?"

"A simple statement of a simple fact. Mademoiselle Colonna is associated in my memory with the most eventful day of my life, and if I

had tried ever so hard to forget that I had once had the honour of meeting her, it would not have been possible for me to do so. On that day, I first learned the change in my fortunes."

Miss Colonna smiled, and put out her hand.

"Then I insist on being forgiven," she said. "I will not consent to be the one disagreeable episode in so bright a story."

"But I can't forgive you twice over," replied Saxon, bashfully, scarcely daring to touch the tips of her delicate fingers.

"Which means, that you had done so already? Thank you. Now we must be friends; and you shall come and talk to my father, who is deeply interested in your free and beautiful country. Would that our own beloved Italy were half so happy!"

With this she took Saxon's arm, and they crossed over to where her father and Major Vaughan were sitting in earnest conversation.

In the mean while, Lord Castletowers was wishing himself in Saxon's place, and thinking how gladly he would have given the best hunter in his stables to be so wronged, and so solicited, by Olimpia Colonna.

CHAPTER XXVI. THE OCTAGON TURRET.

GIULIO COLONNA was never so immersed in political labours as during these eight weeks that he and his daughter had been staying at Castletowers. He sat all day, and sometimes more than half the night, at his desk, answering letters, drawing up declarations and addresses, and writing fiery pamphlets in Italian, French, and English. Olimpia helped him for many hours each day, often rising at dawn to correct his proofs, and decipher his secret correspondence. Every now and then, a special messenger would come down from London by the mid-day express; or a batch of telegraphic despatches arrived, full of secret information in cypher, or so worded to be unintelligible to all save the receiver. And sometimes Lord Castletowers, after a hasty summons to the octagon turret, would order out his black mare, and, laden with messages, gallop over to the station as furiously as if the very lives of his guests depended on his speed.

Then Lady Castletowers would look after him with a little deprecating smile; and, turning to the morning visitor who might happen to be sitting with her at the time, would say something about her poor, dear friend, Signor Colonna, and those foolish intrigues in which he still persisted in taking so much interest; or would, perhaps, let fall a word of half-implied regret that her son, the Earl, whose English politics were so thoroughly unexceptionable, should yet suffer himself to be attracted by the romance of this so-called "Italian cause."

But the intrigues went on nevertheless; and her ladyship, who was quite satisfied if Signor Colonna showed himself at the dinner-table, and Olimpia spent her evenings in the drawing-room, little dreamed that that room in the octagon turret was the focus of a fast-coming revolution. Fearful things—things that would

have frozen the bluest blood in her ladyship's veins—were being done daily under her very roof. Strategical operations were mapped out, and military proclamations translated, by the hand of her own son. Subscriptions to the cause poured in by every post. Revolutionary commissions in embryo revolutionary regiments were countersigned by Colonna, and despatched in her ladyship's own post-bag, under cover to all kinds of mysterious Smiths and Browns in different quarters of London; and as for musket-money, it was a marvel that the very cheques which accumulated in her house did not explode, and reduce the place to ashes.

A great storm was really brewing, and the leaven of resistance was at work among the masses of Southern Italy. An insurrection had already broken out at Palermo; but it had hitherto attracted no very serious notice in London or Paris. Honourable members attended to it but slightly, as a mere formidable riot, or a salutary warning to sovereigns who misgoverned their subjects and neglected the advice of their neighbours. But Giulio Colonna, in his little room at Castletowers, knew well enough how to interpret the first faint mutterings of that distant thunder. He knew where it would break out next, and where the first shaft of the lightning would fall. His own pen was the conductor—his own breath the wind by which the storm-clouds were driven.

Yet Colonna was no soldier. A braver man never lived; but the sword was not his weapon. A student in his youth, a delicate man at his prime, he was born for the cabinet, and not the camp. Bodies need brains as much, and sometimes more, than they need hands; and Colonna was the brain of his party. He was never more useful to his friends, he was never more formidable to his enemies, than when bending over his desk, pale and sleepless, and never weary.

The Earl of Castletowers had described his friend rightly when he spoke of him as a man of antique virtue. His virtues were precisely of the antique type—so precisely that his detractors ranked some of them but little above vices. In his creed, as in the creed of the Roman citizen during the great days of the Republic, the love of country held the highest place. Italy was his God. To serve her, he thankfully accepted privation, contumely, personal danger, banishment, and oppression. To serve her, he stooped to beg, to dissimulate, to mask hatred with smiles, and contempt with courtesy. To say that he was ready at any moment to lay down his own life for Italian liberty was to say nothing. He was ready to sacrifice his daughter, like Jephtha; or his dearest friends; or his good repute; or innocent blood, if innocent blood were the indispensable condition of success. These were indeed antique virtues—virtues that had nothing in common with the spirit of Christian chivalry. His worst enemies could not deny that Giulio Colonna was a hero, and a patriot. His bitterest slanderers never hinted a doubt of his sincerity. But it was a

significant fact that his blindest worshippers, ready as they were to compare him with every hero that made the glory of classic Greece and Rome, never dreamed of linking his name with that of Bruce or Bayard, Washington or La Rochejaquelein. He was, in very truth, more Pagan than Christian.

Giulio Colonna was a great man, a noble man, an heroic man, after his kind; a man of vast intellectual powers, of untiring steadfastness, of inexhaustible energy and devotion; but a man wholly dominated by a single idea, and unable to recognise any but his own arbitrary standard of right and wrong.

On the morning after Saxon's arrival at Castletowers, the three young men went out with their guns and dogs, and the Colonnas were busy together in their quiet study in the octagon turret. It was a very small room—a mere closet—with one deep multioned window, overlooking a formal space of garden. A few prints on the walls, a few books on the shelves, a bureau, a table heaped with letters and papers, three or four chairs, and a davenport in the recess of the window, were all the furniture it contained. At the davenport sat Olimpia, copying a long list of memoranda, while her father was busy with his morning's correspondence at the larger table. He had received a budget of some forty letters by that post, and was going through them rapidly and methodically, endorsing some for future reference, selecting others for immediate reply, and flinging the rest into a waste-paper basket beside his chair. When the last was disposed of, his daughter lifted up her head, and said:

"What news to day, padre mio?"

The Italian sighed wearily.

"None," he replied. "None of any value. A few lines from Bertaldi; but he has nothing new to tell. Things remain about the same in Sicily. Garibaldi wants money. Nothing can be done without money—nothing worth doing."

"Better to attempt nothing, than make a useless demonstration," said Olimpia, quickly.

"Ay—far better."

"Is that all from Italy?"

"All."

"And from London? I thought I saw Lord Barmouth's handwriting."

"Yes—he sends a cheque for twelve pounds; and here are three or four others, and a subscription from Birmingham—not twenty-five pounds in all!"

Olimpia rose, and laid her hand lovingly upon her father's shoulder.

"Do not be discouraged, padre mio," she said. "The movement is as yet scarcely begun, and our friends have not realised the importance of the crisis. The English, we must remember, are not roused to enthusiasm by a few words. When we have proved to them that our people are in earnest, they will help us with hearts and hands."

"And in the mean while, our volunteers are to be slaughtered like sheep, for want of proper weapons!" replied Colonna, bitterly. "No,

Olimpia, it is *now* that we need funds—now, when the struggle is scarcely begun, and the work lies all before us. There can be no real discipline without arms, food, and clothing; and without discipline, all the valour in the world is of no avail. What can weaponless men do to prove themselves in earnest?"

"Die," said she, with kindling cheek and eye.

"Yes—we can all do that; but we prefer to do it with something better than a pike or a scythe in our hands."

Saying this, he pushed back his chair, and began walking gloomily up and down the narrow space between the window and the door. He came presently to a sudden halt, looked full into his daughter's eyes, and said:

"We want twenty-five thousand pounds, at the very least, before ten more days have passed over our heads."

"So much as that? Alas! it is impossible."

"I am not sure that it is impossible," said Colonna, still looking at her.

"No? what do you mean?"

"Sit down, my child—here, by my side—and I will tell you."

She sat down, and he took her hand between both of his own. Perhaps her heart throbbed for a moment in some vague apprehension of what might next be said; but neither her face nor her hand betrayed emotion.

"There is a young man in this house," said the Italian, "to whom such a sum as twenty-five thousand pounds would be of less importance than a handful of bajocchi to one of our volunteers."

"Mr. Trefalden?"

"Mr. Trefalden. He is worth four or five millions."

"Yes—I remember. We were talking of it at breakfast, a few weeks ago."

"We were; and I promised myself at the time that I would move heaven and earth to gain him over to the cause."

"It will not be difficult."

"In the ordinary degree, not at all; but we must do more than that."

"It is hopeless to dream that he will give us twenty-five thousand pounds," said Miss Colonna, hastily.

"I mean him to give us a million."

"A million! Are you mad?"

"I mean him to give us a million—two millions—three millions—all he possesses, if less than all will not suffice to set our Italy free! Listen, Olimpia mia—we have been told the strange story of this young man's life. We know how pure, and pastoral, and unworldly it has been. We find him simple and enthusiastic as a child—his heart open to every generous impression—his soul susceptible to every sense of beauty. To such a nature all high things are possible—with such a nature, all that we desire may be done. I look upon this youth as the destined liberator—as the destined sacrifice!"

Olimpia sighed, and shook her head.

"If he were Italian," she said, "it would be easy—and justifiable."

"Justifiable!" echoed her father, with an angry gesture. "In our holy cause, all means are justifiable. How often must I repeat that?"

"It is a point, padre mio, on which we can never think quite alike," she replied, gently. "Let it pass."

He dropped her hand; rose abruptly; and walked restlessly to and fro, muttering to himself. She also rose, and stood, waiting till he should speak again. Then he drew his hand across his brow, and said, harshly:

"The burden of this work must rest chiefly on you, Olimpia."

"I will do what I can," she replied.

"Do you know what you have to do?"

"I think so. I have done it often enough before."

Colonna shook his head.

"No," he said, "that is not enough. You must make him love you—you must make him marry you."

"Father!"

"It is the only certain way to achieve our purpose. He is young and impressionable—you have beauty, fascination, eloquence, and that nameless sway over the will and sympathy of others which has already won hundreds of ardent spirits to the cause. In a week he will be at your feet."

"You ask me to sell myself!" exclaimed Olimpia, with a magnificent scorn upon her lip that would have become an offended goddess.

"For Italy."

She clasped her hands together, in a wild, passionate way; and went over to the window.

"For Italy," repeated Colonna, solemnly. "For the cause to which I have consecrated you, my only child, since the moment when you were first laid, smiling, in my arms. For the cause in which my own youth and manhood have been spent. For the cause in which I should not hesitate to go to the stake to-morrow, or to shed your heart's blood with my own hand."

"I had rather give my heart's blood than do this thing," said Olimpia, with averted face.

"The martyr may not choose from what palm his branch shall be severed," replied her father, sternly.

She made no answer. For some moments they were both silent. Then Colonna spoke again.

"With money now at our command," he said, "success would be certain. Without it, nothing but failure awaits us. Twenty-five thousand pounds, judiciously spent, would equip six thousand men; and with six thousand at his back, Garibaldi would enter Naples in the course of a few days. But what does he say himself?—that whatever is done, must be done in the name of Sardinia? In the name of Sardinia, that gives neither a soldier nor a pseudo to the struggle! In the name of Sardinia, whose king dares not countenance our effort, but who is ready to reap the fruits of our victories! No, no, Olimpia mia—it is not twenty-five thousand pounds that we need. It is a million. With a million, we should free not only the Sicilies, but the Romagna, and reconstruct the great re-

public. With a million, we may reject the patronage of Victor Emmanuel, and the whole monarchical party!"

"With but one million?" said Miss Colonna, doubtfully.

"With but one—or two, if two be needed, and we have two at command. What is one man's wealth, or one woman's hand, in comparison with results such as these? What is any private interest, when valued against the honour and freedom of a great country?"

Again Olimpia was silent.

"And then," he pursued, eagerly, "with a Roman senate at the Capitol, and a Dictator at the head of the Roman legions, we shall do that which France and Sardinia together failed to do. We shall expel the Austrian from the soil, and buy back Venetia with our blood!"

Olimpia turned at last. Her face was very pale, and the burnished gold of her hair crowned her in the sunlight, like a glory.

"Enough," she said, calmly. "This young man's wealth shall be bought for Italy, if aught that I can give will purchase it."

Colonna took her in his arms, kissing her brow. "There speaks the true Colonna!" he said. "Had my daughter even given her heart to some other, I should have expected this concession—ay, though he had been the best and bravest of our Italian chivalry; but as it is, her duty and her love may yet go together."

"Nay—we will put love out of the question," she said, coldly.

"Heaven grant that I may live to see that day when, through thy deed, my Olimpia, our beloved country shall be free—free from the shores of the Adriatic to the waters of Tarento!"

"Amen," replied Olimpia, and left the room.

HOW I DISCOUNTED MY BILL.

SOME three or four months ago, I wanted to discount an accommodation bill for fifty pounds, the proceeds of which were to be divided between myself, who was the drawer, and a friend, who was the acceptor. I had asked my tailor whether he could recommend me to any one who would "do" the bill without keeping me hanging about for an answer (as is generally the custom of the discounting fraternity), until I was sick and tired of waiting. Mr. Snips merely made one condition with me, namely, that if successful in getting the money for the bill, I should pay a part of his little account, which was of some twelve months' standing. To this I agreed, and was forthwith furnished with a letter of introduction to a large wholesale Jew clothier in the City, to whom I at once repaired in a Hansom. The clothier read Mr. Snips's letter of introduction, and, as a matter of course, at once said—as all discounters do say—that he would have been most happy to do the needful for any gentleman introduced by his good friend Snips, but that he really had not the money in the house. To this I suggested an open cheque, payable either to my order, or to bearer, and

that I did not mind taking a cab to any part of London where his banker might reside. But the clothier did not seem to see the force of this remark. He replied, that it was against his rule to draw his balance at the bankers below a certain amount, and that it was already too low. Had I come the day before yesterday, he had then three or four thousand pounds lying idle which he did not know how to dispose of, and he would have been too happy to accommodate me with fifty, or even a hundred pounds. But since then he had invested all his spare cash in certain shares which he had been able to pick up a bargain. He was very sorry indeed, very sorry, not to be able to oblige the friend of his friend Mr. Snips, but to do so to-day was really quite out of the question. Could I come again in ten days, or a fortnight? He then might be able to meet my wishes. I replied that I wanted the money immediately, and was ready to pay any reasonable interest that might be asked; but that a fortnight hence, the money would be of no use to me. Could he not, if he were so very short of ready cash, transfer to me one or more of the shares he had lately purchased? I could sell them, and take the proceeds, leaving my bill with him as security. But even this attempt to meet the difficulty he did not approve of. He said that to sell shares so soon after he had purchased them would ruin his credit, and was not to be thought of.

Seeing that the clothier did not apparently wish to discount the bill, I prepared to take leave of him. I suppose my manner was that of a rather angry man, for no sooner did I take up my hat to go, than he for the first time asked me to show him the bill, and inquired who the acceptor was, what was his occupation, what were his means, and so forth. To all these questions I gave the best answers I could. I wished to tell the whole truth; but I had a secret wish to make the bill appear as good a document as possible.

In the course of my explanation, I happened to mention that the acceptor of the draft was a captain in the army, and that his town address—or whenever he was not with his corps—was at the “Army and Navy Club.” The words were hardly out of my mouth when I saw the clothier’s eyes lighten up, and he immediately asked me to what regiment the gentleman belonged; taking up at the same time an Army List from the desk before him. When I told him, he turned to it at once, and compared the initials and name in the list with those upon the bill. This done, he said that, although he really had not the means of discounting the bill himself, he thought that if I could leave it with him for twenty-four hours, he might induce a friend of his to do so. To this I consented, for not only had I not endorsed the bill—and therefore it would be of no use if passed away without my signature—but the clothier offered to give—and gave—me a receipt for the document. I therefore left the draft with an understanding that I was to call the following day.

Next day I called accordingly, and was rather put out by the clothier’s telling me he could do nothing with my bill, and that he feared if I offered even fifty per cent interest, I should not be able to discount it. On hearing this, I demanded my bill back again. The clothier gave it me—none the cleaner for being carried about a whole day in his pocket. A sudden thought had struck him. “If you go to this gentleman,” he said, handing me a card, “and say you have come to him from me, he will perhaps be able to do what you want; but I must warn you that he will charge you a high rate of discount.” I thanked him, and, taking the card, saw printed upon it “Mr. Steinmetz, Eastern Coffee-house, Cornhill.”

The establishment at which Mr. Steinmetz gave his address was more a large room where men of business resort and where appointments are made on matters of business, than a coffee or an eating-house. It is true that in one corner of it there was a counter at which wine, pale ale, sandwiches, and other refreshments, were to be found; but the main body of the very large chief room was taken up with stands at which newspapers were fixed for the more convenient reading of the subscribers, and smaller tables upon which were all kinds of Directories, Almanacks, Gazetteers, and other similar books of reference. The Eastern Coffee-house is, moreover, a great place of resort for merchants and others connected with shipping insurance business. Captains of merchant vessels go there to meet their owners, and owners go there to meet their captains. To be free of the place, it is necessary to become a member; but, beyond the payment of two guineas per annum, no qualification is required. It is a convenient place for a man of business, as he may meet a friend there, learn the news, hear of a bargain, eat his luncheon, insure a ship, or get through any other transactions he likes.

To the Eastern Coffee-house in Cornhill I accordingly repaired. Upon asking for Mr. Steinmetz at the door, an individual was pointed out who bore every outward and visible sign of being a Jew by race and a German by nationality. Not that Germans like unto this gentleman are met with in Germany, nor, indeed, anywhere out of London. Mr. Steinmetz shaved close, leaving no hair on his face save a short pair of mutton-chop whiskers. He spoke English well, although with a very decided Teutonic accent, and would invariably reply in that tongue to any person who addressed him in either German or French. He affected to despise greatly his fellow-countrymen, often speaking of them as “those tammed teherman fellows,” and avowed a most supreme contempt for any cookery save that of Great Britain; though I believe that in secret he indulged largely in sauer-kraut, sausages, and Rhenish wines. In his manner he was loud, vulgar, cringing to those who were wealthy, arrogant to those who had no money, and brutal to those who were in his debt. He had no clerks, no office, no place of business. He was always to be found at the Eastern Coffee-house, Cornhill; and his

day-book, cash-book, waste-book and ledger, seemed all comprised in a gigantic pocket-book, which he carried in the breast of his coat. Yet this man was well known to be very rich. He had respectable current accounts in two good City banks, and held many shares in first-rate joint-stock companies. From the time he arrived at the Eastern Coffee-house in the morning, until he left it in the evening, he was giving some person or other an interview, and there were always two or three more individuals waiting to speak to him. When I have added that although he professed to be a Jew, Mr. Steinmetz worked as hard as any Gentile upon his Sabbath-day; that he lived at Brixton in lodgings which cost him seven shillings a week; that he passed the Sunday in lamenting over not being able to do any business; that his god was Mammon; and his real occupation that of a discounter—I think I have said all that need be said of his history.

Mr. Steinmetz at once asked to see the bill, asked me about myself and the acceptor, and told me to call next day, when he would give me a decisive answer, "yes or no."

Twenty-four hours after my first interview with Mr. Steinmetz, I was once more at the Eastern Coffee-house. Mr. Steinmetz was punctual to his appointment, and came forward to meet me. He said he never "looked" at bills for such small amounts as fifty pounds, but would introduce me to a friend who might be induced to do so. "The question is, Mr. Weston," he said, addressing me, "what will you lose?" I could not understand what he meant; and, seeing I was all abroad as to his slang, he explained that he wished to know what amount of discount I would pay.

I replied, that I was willing to pay anything in reason, adding—like a greenhorn as I was—that I was much in want of money, and would not mind paying a little more than usual, provided the business could be carried through at once. It struck me, that considering Mr. Steinmetz "never looked" at bills for such small amounts as fifty pounds, he appeared remarkably anxious to know how much I was willing to pay for the accommodation. This, however (so I reasoned to myself) might be owing to his wishing to serve the friend to whom I was to be introduced.

In a few minutes Mr. Steinmetz's friend appeared, and was introduced to me by the name of Fanst. Mr. Fanst, in appearance, bore the same relation to Mr. Steinmetz that a corporal does to a sergeant, or a deacon to a priest. Mr. Fanst was evidently from Hamburg, was of decidedly Israelite caste of countenance, and imitated English dress and manners.

Mr. Fanst at once commenced the business before us, by asking me the same question as Mr. Steinmetz had, "What I would lose" in the transaction. Now, as the present was, I fear, by no means the last, so it was certainly not the first bill transaction in which I had been engaged. But as, on previous occasions, I had always had to do with West-end discounters, I thought that by transacting business

in the City I should get what I wanted at a much cheaper rate than I could have done on the fashionable side of Charing-cross. "A shilling a pound a month," or at the rate of sixty per cent per annum, had always been thought a fair profit by the gentlemen with whom I had previously dealt, and I therefore informed my new friends that I was ready "to lose" seven pound ten shillings on the fifty pounds for the three months, and to take forty-two pounds ten shillings for my bill. At this proposition both the Germans laughed outright: Mr. Steinmetz the longer, the louder, and by far the more offensively. They then jabbered together in German for about a minute, after which Mr. Fanst turned to me and said, "Are you quite certain, sir, that this bill will be paid by your friend who has accepted it, when it is due?" I replied, "I had not the least doubt about it; my friend was a gentleman of some little means, was an honourable man,"—the two discounters sneered at each other when I mentioned the word honourable—"was an officer in the army, was known to meet his engagements, and that in any case, if he failed, I would certainly pay the money." As I spoke, I observed Mr. Fanst busy writing down something in his pocket-book, but I thought he was merely engaged in calculating what terms he would ask me for discounting the bill. At last he handed the book and pencil to Steinmetz, who hastily wrote something—it seemed as if he merely added his initials to the writing, and gave it back to Mr. Fanst. The latter then turned to me and said, "Now, sir, I will tell you what I will do for you. I have got no money of my own to dispose of to-day, but here is a cheque for thirty-four pounds sixteen shillings from the Rhine Steam-boat Company, payable to my order. I will endorse it, and make it over to you for your bill, if you like. Only, remember that I know nothing of the acceptor of the bill, and that I take it partly on account of the introduction you have brought to my friend Mr. Steinmetz, but chiefly on account of the representations you have made respecting the bill, and of its being certain to be met at maturity."

Here was a state of affairs! On the one hand, I was as poor as a man could be, and in order to avoid a writ being served upon me, wanted to pay away some money that very day. But to pay upwards of fifteen pounds for the discount of a bill at three months for fifty—being at the rate of more than a hundred and twenty per cent per annum—I thought too much of a good thing. For a few seconds I turned the matter over in my mind, and during the time my face was closely scanned by the two Germans: Mr. Steinmetz certainly evincing more anxiety than his fellow-countryman, to know whether I decided upon taking their offer. It was curious enough to remark that, although both professed not to wish to do the bill for me, yet both seemed very anxious that I should accept the conditions.

This very eagerness made me nervous and uncertain. I temporised with them, and, turning to Mr. Fanst, said, "Make it even money, give

me forty pounds, and I'll do the business. That will be discounting at the rate of eighty per cent per annum." But these Hamburg Hebrews were by no means ready to part with the sum of five pounds four shillings. They declared that the risk was great; that twenty per cent could be got in the City on short bills, with goods—stolen, I presume—in hand as security; that they only knew me in this transaction; that they had not inquired about the acceptor, who might be good or might be bad—most probably (so they charitably concluded) the latter—and that if I went to the bad in any way, they would have no one from whom to recover the money. But I stood firm, and, after a world of trouble they agreed to split the difference, and to give me thirty-seven pounds for my bill, which they consequently discounted at the rate of about a hundred and four per cent per annum.

If any one wants three months to pass over quickly, let him give a bill at that date. The money I got for the slip of stamped paper bearing my signature as drawer, as well as my endorsement, was gone in less than a week; but the period which bankers call "maturity" seemed to come almost as soon. I received a letter from Mr. Fanst telling me that the bill would be due on such a day, and warning me that if it were not paid, he would have to put it into the hands of his solicitor. I wrote to my military friend, the acceptor of the bill (who, I have forgotten to mention, had half the amount for which it was discounted), and asked him to provide for the payment of half the amount of the bill. As ill luck would have it, my friend had been ordered abroad at two days' notice to join his regiment. Previous to leaving England he had paid the money due upon his half of the bill, twenty-five pounds, to a brother-officer, with directions to find me out and send it to me. This gentleman had lost the memorandum containing my name and address, and, not knowing what to do, had remitted the money back to my friend, who by this time was well on his way to India, via the Cape. The bill, which was made payable at the army agent's where my friend kept his account, was presented there for payment; but as the acceptor had, previous to sailing for India, closed his account with his agents, it was returned with a bit of paper pinned to it, on which were written the words, "No effects." To make matters worse, the money upon which I had depended to meet my half of the bill was not paid me, although I felt certain that it would be forthcoming in two or three weeks. I wrote to this effect to Mr. Fanst, but, having lately changed my residence, I did not give him my new address, for I did not want to have writs served upon me. I mentioned where a letter would find me; but to my surprise received no reply, nor, for a week or two, did I hear anything whatever concerning the bill.

At last, one morning happening to go into the shop of my tailor, Mr. Snips, that individual took me aside with a most anxious face, and told me he had heard the previous day in the

City that Mr. Fanst was not going to sue me before a civil court for the bill, but had put the whole affair into the hands of a criminal lawyer, and had determined to take out a summons or warrant against me at the Mansion House. He, Mr. Fanst, had been on the previous day at the clothier's, of whom I spoke before, and had declared his conviction that the whole affair was a "tammed swindle," and that I had obtained the money from him under false pretences. The acceptor of the bill, he said, was not to be found in England, and I, the drawer, had been keeping out of the way ever since the bill was due. Moreover, he declared that when I asked him and he consented to discount the bill, I had told him that the acceptor was a man of means, an officer in the army, and certain to meet his engagements; also, that I myself would certainly have the means to pay the bill at maturity, supposing the acceptor failed to do so. He told the clothier that he had taken down my words in writing at the time, and that a friend of his who was present had heard all I said, and had even put his initials to those words. This, accounted for the writing in the pocket-book.

I knew very well that I was perfectly innocent of any intention to defraud Mr. Fanst or Mr. Steinmetz. But to be "had up" at the Mansion House on a criminal charge, whether proved or not, was enough to blast the best character for life. In my perplexity I went to see a solicitor, and by his advice kept out of the way, employing in the mean time my tailor, Mr. Snips, who reported all he learnt of the enemy's movements. The story Mr. Fanst made out was this: I had gone to see him—had sought him out—had offered him a bill for discount, which I told him was accepted by an officer in the army, who was a captain in rank and a man of means. On the faith of my representation he had discounted the bill, having taken the precaution to note down what I told him respecting my own means and those of the acceptor. These words of mine he had written in the presence of a friend, who had put his initials to them, and who could swear to the truth of what he said. Also, that the tale I had told him was, that I had recently been left a considerable legacy, but that two or three months would elapse before the money would be paid me, and that I wanted the money for this bill in the mean time. I need hardly say that this story was altogether and entirely false, but the rascal had a witness who would no doubt swear to the truth of all he said, and was equally certain to deny all I could put forward in my defence. On the other hand, I had no one who could say a word in my behalf, for the only witness present when the transaction took place was Mr. Steinmetz.

At first I resolved to brave out the infamous accusation, and to dare the scoundrels to take me to the Mansion House. But after a long consultation with my solicitor, and at his urgent advice, I determined not to do so. As the case stood, he said, the chances were greatly in favour of the Lord Mayor or Alderman committing the case for trial. Mr. Fanst had an office in the City,

was pretty well known as a sort of ship and insurance broker among foreign houses, and would no doubt be looked upon by the magisterial magnates as "a highly respectable man." The witness in Mr. Fanst's favour was rich, and could, no doubt, bring forward witnesses as to his respectability. They could lose nothing if the case went before the Lord Mayor, for the worst that could happen to them was that I should be declared not guilty of the charge. But whatever way the matter turned I must be the sufferer. My solicitor was right, and every friend I consulted gave me the same advice. I had fallen among thieves.

Messrs. Fanst and Steinmetz had put their affair into the hands of one of the lowest of the very low criminal attorneys. There is a peculiar race of these men, who dare not practise before magistrates who are lawyers like themselves, but who generally have it very much their own way with those who administer the law by virtue of their eminence as tradesmen. My solicitor advised me to treat with the gang through Mr. Snips; who, having been the innocent cause of introducing me to the scoundrels, was now most anxious to get me out of the mess. In the mean time, I was not to leave London, but was not to show myself needlessly, so that, failing to find me, Mr. Fanst and his friend would perhaps come into terms which would be easier for me.

The first overture Mr. Snips made to Mr. Fanst was, that I should give a bill at three months for seventy pounds, being the original fifty pounds, with interest at the rate of one hundred and sixty per cent per annum: which bill he, Mr. Snips, would put his name to. The offer was rejected with scorn. Mr. Fanst declared that I was a scoundrel, a swindler, a rascal, and that he would show me up at Guildhall as a man who obtained money by false pretences. If any arrangement was to be made, he, Mr. Fanst, would have nothing to do with it. Mr. Snips might see the solicitor in whose hands the case was put; but, so far as he (Mr. Fanst) was concerned, he had determined to take out a summons or a warrant against me.

To the solicitor of this worthy, Mr. Snips repaired, and was at once met with the indispensable condition, that before anything could be done his costs must be paid, and these costs he made out to be ten guineas. This amount must be paid down in cash, and then he would talk of what terms he would advise his clients to consent to respecting the bill. Mr. Snips said he must consult me before he could say anything, and next day, by letter, told me what were the results of his interview with the attorney.

With me there was the difficulty not only of making terms with this gang of thieves, but also of finding the money to do it. The last difficulty, however, was smoothed by Mr. Snips, who offered me assistance. He had several meetings with Mr. Steinmetz at the Eastern Coffee-house to try and bring him to reason; but the more he made advances, the more the other drew back, and so offensive was his bullying and blustering, that at last Mr. Snips declined to meet him any more.

Acting always under the advice of my solicitor, Mr. Snips for several days did not go near the lawyer for the other side, merely leaving his address with him, so that when they came to their senses they might know where to find him. After a short time this treatment produced the desired effect. The rascals saw that, although they had taken out a summons against me at Guildhall, they did not know where to find me. In order to put them still more off the scent, I repaired abroad, so that my letters bearing a foreign postmark were shown to them, by way of confirming Mr. Snips's assertion that I had left England for the present. To remain out of the country any length of time being, however, impossible for me, I felt anxious that the affair should be arranged. In the mean time I had come into funds, and, through Mr. Snips, offered in hard cash half the amount of the original bill, and a bill at three months for the balance: the bill to be endorsed by Mr. Snips. This they would not listen to.

At last, and just as I had given up all hope of settlement, Mr. Snips wrote to me that he had arranged the business. He had paid down ten pounds in cash for their solicitor's costs; twenty pounds as a first instalment of the fifty pound bill; and had given five bills of twenty pounds each, payable one, two, three, four, and five months after date. These, bearing my signature and his endorsement, were accepted by Mr. Fanst, and thus I had to pay altogether one hundred and forty pounds for the temporary advance of thirty-seven. No wonder that bill discounting is a gainful trade, more particularly in view of the recently adopted device of threatening the non-payer with criminal proceedings.

ALL SORTS OF THINGS.

ALL sorts of things are to be met with in a large building of two or three stories—not very bright; for the windows and skylights are not allowed to interfere more than is necessary with wall-space and overhead-space; not very clean, for all sorts of things include many that are unavoidably dusty and dirty; not very pretty, for prettiness would neither be looked for nor wanted in such a place; but very orderly. It is a Railway Storehouse. No matter which nor where; no matter to which of the great companies it may belong, nor whether in or out of town. Such storehouses are all pretty much alike in general scope, however they may differ in details. At one dépôt a company may make some of their locomotives, and repair all; at another, they may make and repair passenger carriages, and at another goods waggons and coal-trucks; but whatever may be the extent of their manufacturing and handicraft arrangements, a storehouse filled with all sorts of things is an indispensable accompaniment. It would never do to send to the ironmonger, nor to the oilman, when the things are wanted; they must be procured before they are wanted, or an enormous amount of time (which is money) would be wasted.

Even if there were no locomotives nor carriages made or repaired, there would still be required a great variety of stores, to serve the various stations, signal-houses, sidings, and points.

Could we pick a locomotive to pieces with the same facility as that with which a celebrated personage analysed a pair of bellows, we should find the separate parts incredibly numerous. In theory, the work to arrange for is a simple one; to light a fire, to make the water boil, to convert the water into steam, to make the steam drive two pistons to and fro in two horizontal cylinders, and to make these pistons turn the wheels of the locomotive—this is all. But what an all it is in practice! Besides the sheet iron and the larger castings and the brass and copper tubes, the minor knick-knacks almost defy counting; and yet they must be counted, and a store of every one of them kept on hand, ready at a moment's notice. Everything is so nicely adjusted and graduated, that a nut or a screw for one locomotive would exactly fit the corresponding spot in any other; they are not merely as like as two peas, but much more so. Crank axles and straight axles, axle-boxes and box leathers, bolts and nuts of a dozen kinds and more than a dozen sizes, buffer blocks and buffer cylinders, buffer plates and buffer rods, gun-metal castings of small size but great variety, blow-off cocks and glass gauge cocks, connecting-rods and brasses, eccentrics and funnels, fire bars, guard rails, piston rings, springs for buffers and springs for pistons, tires and tire-bars, union joints and universal joints—all are wanted, all are kept in store, and all are arranged and labelled in such way that everything can be found quickly when required.

As with the locomotive-makers and menders, so with those whose skill and labour are applied to carriages and waggons; they must send to the storehouse for the materials whereon to work. All sorts of things meet the eye in such variety as to bewilder one who sees them for the first time. Nearly twenty different species of timber—beginning with alder, and going down to willow—are used in the various vehicles; and, besides these, papier-mâché, wonderfully tough sheets of thick smooth millboard, is used for the panels of the best carriages. The main structure and the adornments of the carriages alike depend on materials obtained from the storehouse. The paint and oil and varnish for the wood and iron work; the brass handles and the white beading; the windows and the window-straps; the cloth and leather for cushions; the horsehair, coach lace, hat straps, umbrella nets, carpeting or rugs for tip-top carriages; the inner lamps for the comfort of the passengers, and the outer lamps for the guidance of the enginemen; the name plates and number plates for each carriage and compartment—all are here. And then, among the rougher things, the tarpaulins or sheets for covering goods waggons are quite amazing in number, and must be kept in store to replace those which are worn out. As for the station odds and ends, we neither

know where they begin nor where they end. The shelves around and about the storehouse are crowded with—well, all sorts of things: we cannot find a better designation; some for the booking-office, some for the station-master's office, some for the waiting-rooms, some for the lamp-room, some for the arrival and departure platforms, some for the signal apparatus, some for the outside of the station; and all these things must be forthcoming when called for, upon due requisition sent to one or other of the storekeepers.

Then, to enable the workmen to make and repair locomotives, to make and repair carriages and waggons, and to do various kinds of mechanical handiwork needful for the daily service of a long line of rail, almost every kind of tool and implement that we have ever heard of, for working in metal and wood, is kept in store. Letter A supplies us with adzes, anvils, ash-sticks, augers, awls, and axes; letter B with barrows, baskets, beam scales, beetles, bellows, belts, benches, bits, blocks, blowpipes, boring bars, boring bits, boxes, braces, branding irons, brushes, buckets, and bung borers; letter C with callipers, cans, candlesticks, cant bars, capstans, carboys, hand carts, casks, chests, chisels, chisel rods, combs (graining), compasses, crabs, cramps, cranes, crowbars, crucibles. If the reader had patience for more, there is plenty more for him, to the end of the alphabet. Even a bradawl seems an official affair, when it has the initials of a great company stamped on it.

Let not any one run away with the idea that the grease department at these great depôts must be insignificant as well as dirty; and that a few cans-full or boxes-full once now and then will suffice. When on a journey, and stopping at one of the larger stations, those passengers who do not care to go into the refreshment-room have their attention riveted on the man with the yellow ointment (very like pine-apple ice cream). He gropes along by the side of the train, lifts up certain covers above the axles of the wheels, and with a glance sees whether the axle has sufficient lubricating food to last to the next principal station. If the axle is getting hungry, he digs a wooden knife into his grease-box, takes up a tempting lump of cream, puts it into the axle-box, shuts down the cover, and trots on to the next pair of wheels. It would be equally a mistake to suppose that this ointment is coarse in quality or small in quantity. The object in its use is to lubricate the rubbing surfaces of axles, in order to bring down friction to a minimum; and a very nice adjustment of ingredients is necessary to ensure that the substance shall produce the desired result without leaving any grit, and without being too hard in cold weather or too soft in warm. If we choose to touch a little of this ointment, we shall find that it is beautifully smooth and uniform. It was only after many experiments that the right proportions of ingredients—tallow, palm oil, soap, soda, resin, water, and possibly one or two others—were determined. Some of the companies buy their grease ready made; but the giants make their own in huge coppers.

Into these steam is admitted from a boiler. The hot liquor (for the mixture is nearly liquid when hot) fizzes and bubbles and tosses about, until everything is thoroughly mixed with everything else. Then it is transferred to large flat wooden vessels, where it is stirred about while cooling. When cooled, it is shovelled into well-made barrels or casks, and these barrels are sent to all the principal stations, where the grease-men administer the yellow food to the axle-boxes. The substance is required by tons weight every week, on the longer lines of rail.

Even the stationery department at these great depôts is one necessarily of magnitude. Every station-master uses up a great deal of paper every day; for he has to make returns to headquarters about trains, carriages, waggons, passengers, stores, goods, and messages. Then the tickets. These important little bits of cardboard, the representatives of the money which the company are to receive from the public, are cherished with the utmost care. No rude hand is allowed to tamper with them. A special department is allotted to them, with a special superintendent, and a special staff of assistants. They may be purchased in a partly printed state, or singly as oblong bits of white or coloured cardboard, at a shilling or two per thousand. If the company print their own tickets, there are founts of type for the printers, and beautiful machines for giving to each ticket, as it passes through the press, a number different from that of every other ticket of the same kind; the machine registers its own work, and piles the tickets up into dense columnar masses, in which the whole of them take their places according to their numbers. Millions upon millions are required every year by each of the great companies. Each station-master or booking-clerk sends to the superintendent of this department for supplies as fast as he wants them; and as there are tickets from every station to almost every other station, with single and return tickets, and also tickets for different classes of carriages, the total number of kinds is almost incredible. When every farthing is registered taken by the booking-clerks for these tickets, and all matters squared up, then—and not till then—are the battered old tickets consigned to the pulp-vat, there to be worked up again into new cardboard and new tickets; they suffer a metempsychosis, springing up into a new state of existence.

And then the clothing. We do not think much about this when we see the railway servants busily engaged at the station; but it is an item that costs the principal companies very many thousands of pounds annually. When Betsy Harris is going down into the country to take a housemaid's place, her black box, studded with brass nails, and elaborately tied up, is carried from the cab or the omnibus through the station, and across the platform to the luggage van. The hard-working fellow who renders his services in this way may shoulder Betsy Harris's box; or, he may have shoulders, arms, and hands alike occupied with those multi-

farious articles which elderly ladies always take with them when they travel; but it is quite certain that, in the course of an average day, these porters carry many heavy loads on their shoulders. It would not be fair to them, with their small wages, that their own clothes should be speedily brought to Vestiges of (tailors') Creation in this way. Besides, there ought to be means for distinguishing the company's porters from other persons. There are, therefore, strong suits of velveteen, fustian, or corduroy provided, with shoulder-pieces of extra thickness. Then the railway policemen, the smart upright fellows who have certain powers entrusted to them to "take up" offenders, by special clauses in railway acts—they must have their snugly-fitting dresses, provided by the company. The engine-drivers and stokers, who are knocked about in all sorts of weather, with perhaps a torrid zone close to their knees and a frigid zone about their heads and necks, are not, we believe, clothed by the companies. The guards, especially those for the crack passenger-trains, are not only clothed by the company, but are adorned with silvery-looking accoutrements of various kinds, which give them an air of importance. All the official clothing (if livery is too humble a word, we will call it uniform) of the porters, signalmen, pointsmen, gatekeepers, policemen, guards, &c., bears in some kind of embroidery the initials of the company, and the number of the man. Let us say that our company is the Great Grand East West North Southern Amalgamated Central Junction Alliance—a name which includes every other, and is, therefore, sure to be right; in such case the embroidered initials on the collar would be G G E W N S A C J A, together with a particular number appropriated to each person, to distinguish him from his fellows. The clothing department in the storehouse is a large space well occupied with bales and shelves and packages all around. There are contracts for the supply of various kinds of cloth, and other contracts for working up the cloth into garments. As it is not deemed right to put round men into square holes, nor square men into round holes, the garments are made of different sizes and proportions, inasmuch that each man has a chance of being tolerably well fitted—better so than in the army, where there are rather too few sizes for so large a number and variety of men. Some, if not all, of the worn-out uniforms are returned into store, to be disposed of in those inscrutable ways which distinguish the last days of a suit of clothes.

Wonderful it is to think what becomes of all sorts of things when worn out. Who can tell, beyond the fact that nothing is really thrown away? Many articles of iron, when worn out for their original uses, are converted into others; and when these also are worn to weakness, they start into new life as scrap-iron, eagerly purchased by iron-workers, and better fitted than newly smelted iron for a large variety of purposes. Worn-out handles, beading, and name-plates of brass, various pieces of gun-

metal, and yellow metal, and copper, used in locomotives, are always welcome in the melting-pot. The wood of old carriages and waggons, when the railway companies have no further use for it, passes into the hands of persons who are wonderfully ingenious in devising new appliances for it. A man may, we know, be writing on a sheet of paper, the flaxen fibres of which once formed part of his own shirt; and he may in like manner be handling many a pretty or useful article of leather, the material of which once formed a cushion whereon his portly form reposed in a railway carriage. If all the thousand-and-one articles in the storehouse could tell their own tale—how they were born, how they have lived or are living, and what will become of them when their present state of existence is brought to a close—it would be a tale full of much that could and ought to interest us. But we certainly do not think of tales or novels or romances here; the place is rather rough, rather dark, rather dusty, rather cold, rather hard, and it requires a little work of imagination to get into the real poetry that is to be met with even in the railway system.

All sorts of things are looked over at periodical intervals, to see whether the stock on hand corresponds with the book entries, and to determine which among the articles needs renewal. This is an important duty: seeing that, as everything is supplied by contract, it is essential that arrangements be made in time, to replenish the store before it sinks too low. We occasionally see, in the railway newspapers, advertisements from the companies, inviting tenders for the supply of all sorts of things; and these supplies are to be sent in at such times as may suit the convenience of the buyers. Everything is tabulated and booked; every ball of twine and pint of oil has its history recorded, so far as concerns its coming in and going out. The master carriage-mender knows, or ought to know, exactly the amount of his stock of wood, metal, cloth, trimmings, paint, oil, varnish, and other materials; the master locomotive-repairer knows the state of his supply of all things necessary to keep his men going; and each is empowered to draw on the storekeeper for what he wants. The documents kept on both sides are the evidence on which the faithfulness of the various superintendents of departments rests; and, as a necessary precaution, nothing passes in or out of any department without scrupulous book-keeping. Of course this is no more in principle than is observed in any well-managed commercial establishment; but the notable circumstances in relation to the great railway companies are, that the transactions exceed in magnitude those of any private firm whatever, and that in a joint-stock company it is difficult to obtain the same energetic devotion to the affairs as is felt by the partners in a firm. Queer things used to take place in the earlier history of the railway system; but the companies are now well served by their officers, especially where the directors adopt the wise policy of paying sufficiently high salaries to

attract good men and true to their staff. It is not necessarily all sorts of people that would do justice to all sorts of things.

GOING INTO HOUSEKEEPING.

GOING into housekeeping is one of the events in a man's life to be numbered with the first pair of breeches, with casting off jackets (the shell of boyhood) to assume the tails of virility; with being married; with the becoming a father. It is an era in one's existence, a grand transformation scene, a great sensation!

I had been long a lodger, and was accustomed to all sorts of lodgings. Naturally I did not like lodgings. I hold that you cannot be comfortable in lodgings unless you can afford to pay rent enough to put your landlady under your feet—unless you are the first floor, and can trample upon everybody else in the house. You are not comfortable even then; for the sense that the chairs you sit on, and the bed you lie on, and the knives and forks you eat with, are hirelings, the indefinite property of some other person ("party," perhaps, is the proper word here), you scarcely know whom—this sense, I say, is an uncomfortable one, uncomfortable to sit under, to lie under, to eat under, and it leads to longings—longings for your own feather-bed (for the hireling is so chary of feathers); longings for your own arm-chair, which has not been slave to thousands; for your own silver spoon, which is silver, and has not ministered to strange mouths, and scraped out pots—longings, above all, for a roof and a street door to call your own.

There is nothing so annoying to a sensitive lodger with an ambition to be a self-contained and responsible citizen, as the knowledge that other lodgers—whom he may dislike very much, and whom he generally *does* dislike very much—are at liberty to knock double-knocks at his outer door, to race up and down his stairs, and to make noises over his head. A man with a proper ambition does not feel that he is entitled to look upon himself as a full-blown Englishman while he is only part proprietor of a street door, and has no vote, not even at an election for a parish beadle. An Englishman, conscious of a share in Magna Charta, the Bill of Rights, and Habeas Corpus, is not complete until he has a castle of his own, a castle with a portcullis that none may dare pass without respectful challenge. Unfurnished lodgings, with the "whole of the upper part of the house," or the "whole of the lower part of the house," is only half way to the castle after all. True, to have your own sticks—mark, you only call them sticks when you are in lodgings; place them under your own roof, and they assume the dignity of furniture—is something to be proud of; but your pride is still liable to a fall while the second floor and attics are entitled to hammer impatiently at the portcullis, and swear oaths if they be not admitted instantan. You are not yet entitled to go forth upon the battle-

ments and challenge the stranger with "Ho there without! the watchword!" Perhaps he is simply intoxicated and can't find his latch-key.

I remember well when I first set out for my castle. I had sticks, and I took them away in two vans—so you see there were a good many bundles of them. I will notice here an aggravating perversity of landladies. When you are a bad lodger and don't pay the rent regularly, they give you warning and bundle you out with contempt; and equally, when you are a good lodger and *do* pay the rent regularly, and *you* give *them* warning, they sweep out the dust upon you while you are superintending the packing. There is no pleasing them.

I will not dwell upon the sensation which my departing sticks created in the street, further than to say that hardened old householders eyed them critically, and I believe did not think much of them; while lodgers, sighing for the time when they too would be full blown, gazed after the vans sadly, wondering when it would be their turn. Oh, bless you, they knew all about it. It had been the talk of the neighbourhood for some time, that the lower part of number twenty was going to take a 'ouse; and the knowledge of the disgusting fact had stirred much bile. Landladies would sooner forgive you rent than forgive you taking a house. Such conduct on the part of a lodger they regard as upstart impertinence, and if they only knew where you were going to, they'd go and warn the landlord to look sharp after his money.

There are two ordeals on this exciting occasion—coming away from the lodgings and arriving at the castle. In both cases your sticks are criticised. In the former, the neighbours are curious to know what you have got new since you came there; in the latter, they are anxious to ascertain whether you are under or above the mark of the neighbourhood. However good your sticks may be, they never show to advantage heaped on a van. A van is a cruel expositor of the insides of things; and if there is a deal-topped table in your collection, it is sure to be uppermost. Classically and allegorically, a bundle of sticks signifies strength; from the furnishing point of view it signifies weakness.

But I must pause on the threshold of my castle to relate how I summoned up courage to "take" it. I will confess that I walked round it a good deal. I had difficulty in persuading myself that I was in a position to take a house and be the sole master of it. It was too much glory, too much happiness. When I called at the agent's office, I was almost afraid lest the aged clerk might think me too young and inexperienced. I half expected that he would address me as the conscientious publican addresses the urchin of tender years who asks for a glass of gin and cloves for his own drinking—"You go along home to your mother, and don't talk nonsense." I looked through the window for some time, and fancying that the clerk had a very full, I may say overflowing, sense of the responsible character required for taking a house, I had thoughts of approaching

him with the ingenious evasion of the Scottish gentleman who said the sulphur was nae for himsel', but for a freen' ootside. I was haunted by the dread that I was not sufficiently responsible-looking; that I might look good for rent, but not for rent with rates and taxes combined.

Some say that the eyes are the windows of the soul, and the best signals of the character within; others go by the mouth, the nose, and the chin. Give me the voice. I have often been horribly frightened of great personages until I heard them speak, when all my dread vanished in an instant. The voice told me they were human. So, when I summoned up courage to address the house-agent's clerk, and he replied with a few words of ordinary greeting, I knew that he was a man. His eyes indicated nothing; his nose and chin were cast in the mould of severity. It was his voice that betrayed him. And the tones of his voice said, "I am only a clerk, my master doesn't give me much salary, and I like a glass of ale." Ah, that weakness of human nature for a glass of ale! Amiable, but fatal! When I observed that that clerk had a voice mellowed by malt, I knew how to deal with him. There were "lots of parties after the house," he said. It was dry weather, I observed; would it be consistent with his duty to houses, land, and estates, if he were to step round the corner? He was a wonderfully intelligent clerk. He did not want sentences finished and oracles explained. He knew by intuition what stepping round the corner meant. He made me no direct answer, but just said, "George, mind the office for a minute or two."

"They keep a good glass of Kennett round the corner," he said, when we got outside. A glass of Kennett was the open sesame to that clerk's favour. He told me that there were several parties after the house, and that I must conclude the matter at once if I wanted it, as houses in that terrace were in great demand. In the warmth of his friendliness—Kennett *is* warming—he let out a secret usually strictly guarded by house-agents—the name and address of the landlord. His parting advice to me was to see the landlord without an hour's delay, get the preference, and return and sign the agreement. I took the hint, got the preference, returned and signed the agreement, and, as I was passing out of the office, two of the "parties" who had been after the house, were venting their wrath and disappointment upon the head of my friend the clerk, who had just informed them that the house was let.

A glass of Kennett ale did it! It is not that there is much in a glass of Kennett ale, nor in a shilling or sixpence dropped now and then by way of gratuity, but such small acts of largess are regarded as friendly, and they beget friendliness. In this world there are many little treasure boxes of favour and good will that fly wide open to you if you only drop the smallest piece of coin into them. There are people who never learn this worldly philosophy—penny wise and pound foolish folks, who on all occasions sternly refuse to give any one a single farthing over his

due. They save their pence and lose hundreds. It is not bribery; it is not the money that does it. It is the favour begotten by a good heart. My only regret is, that the mediumship of friendliness should be so largely monopolised by "something to drink."

But I have been standing all this time on my new door-step. Well, it is pleasant to stand on a door-step that you can call your own. No one else can come here with dirty feet except on sufferance, and by kind permission of the lessee. The sticks showed well when they were dispersed—thinly I will confess—over the various rooms, and the deal-top table hiding its Norwegian ruggedness under a velvet-pile cover, looked quite splendid. I was never tired of wandering from room to room to admire my household gods. Yes, they were *mine*, and the Temple also was *mine*—at least while I paid my rent.

And then I had a garden. It was, perhaps, a stretch of courtesy to call it so, for it was not much bigger than a good-sized room, but it had a full-grown lime-tree at the end of it. And fancy being the sole lessee of a full-grown tree! It was such a tall, wide-spreading, umbrageous tree, that if I had sent it to an anatomist of means, he would have pronounced this opinion: "Judging from the tree, the proprietor is a person possessed of a mansion and an extensive domain." I may tell you, however, that it was well the tree grew upwards, for if it had been in its nature to lie down, the garden would not have contained it. So much tree to so little garden I never knew before nor since. I took a vast deal of pride in that tree. I used to ascend Primrose Hill to gaze on its top from afar, and say to myself, "Yonder is *my* tree, and close by is *my* roof." One may indeed think himself somebody when he has a tree that can be seen two miles off.

On the first night of possession I remained up until long past midnight admiring my rooms. I sat down in them all, one after the other, gazing at their proportions—though not noble—and at my sticks, which looked so domestic in their new sphere. I caught myself saying, "They are mine! they are mine!" like a demon in a drama, only in beneficent tones. I could not rest in my bed in the morning. I was up with the dawn to see how my house looked—*my* house, mark. Sparrows were twittering in my tree—I almost felt that I had game on my estate. New brooms sweep clean. As a new householder, I swept very clean in attending to all a householder's duties. Every night I went round to see that all the doors were locked. What pride to think that I had doors—not merely one door, but four; front, back, garden and kitchen, and an outer gate! And all *my* property, sole and undivided! I neglected no part of my duty. I had the sweeps in to sweep all the chimneys, though I was not aware that they wanted sweeping particularly; I employed men to examine the drains and the water supply; I was quite delighted when I found that my roof had a tile off, and one of my chimneys smoked and wanted a cowl. I called in plum-

bers and tin-smiths to put them to rights, and in the pride of being a householder, paid the charges out of my own pocket, when I might have sent my bill to my landlord. I was eager to pay taxes, and was quite impatient until they were applied for. When the Queen's taxes came in I thought the amount very inconsiderable. I had heard old householders groan under the burden of taxation; but really this was nothing to groan about—only a pound or two.

The rates for the maintenance of the poor, the police, the gas-lamps, the highways, the pavements, and the main drainage, were better. The total amount was something that I could give a cheque for. And I gave a cheque for it on the first application. I remember that the collector looked at me quite aghast. (I have come to understand his emotion on that occasion, and do not now give him cause to be similarly affected.) I dare say he said to himself, as he closed the gate, that it wouldn't last. If he did, he was quite right. It didn't last. About that cheque: It was the first one I had ever drawn. I had had a virgin cheque-book in my pocket for nearly four-and-twenty hours, and was dying to fill up one of the little slips and sign my name at the bottom of it. I am sure I must have spoiled a whole quire of letter-paper practising my signature. Should I sign myself Sam: or Samuel at full length? Should I have a flourish or no flourish? Which was the easier to forge, a signature with a flourish, or a signature without a flourish? I decided upon a flourish, but in the flurry of signing for the taxes, I forgot the flourish, and, as the flourish did not correspond with the signature which I had previously given at the bank, there were inquiries—naturally, it being the first cheque—and I had to give explanations. It was a noble thing, was it not, to draw my first cheque for taxes? When I am a barrister of seven years' standing I shall, on this score, apply for a Commissionership of Inland Revenue. It was—for some weeks, not many—a source of much pride to me to think that the street-lamp opposite was partly my property; that I helped to pay for it; that I helped to pay for the sewers which they were always taking up to look at and put down again; that I helped to pay for the pavement, and the water-cart, and the fire-escape. (I subscribed to everything; a man had only to come to the door with a paper, and he got the money on the instant.) When a policeman passed, I said to myself, "That officer of the peace is partly my property; how much of him I don't know, possibly only the buckle of his stock, but I pay for a portion of him at any rate." So when I saw a soldier I calculated that perhaps a button belonged to me. It was in that week that I caught myself telling a beggar to begone, that I paid poor's-rates enough, and that there was the workhouse for him—the workhouse which I helped to support.

Yes; the collector was quite right. It didn't last. After a week or two I let the doors take their chance. I was getting used to doors, and going round every night to see that they were bolted

and barred, was a nuisance, especially when one was weary with the cares of life and householding, and wanted to get to bed. After a quarter or two, I told the collector to call again. I told the water-rates to wait, the fire-escape not to bother: I resisted the sweeps until soot fell down and set fire to the chimney; when men came to the door with papers, I looked about for my policeman, albeit I took no pride in him now, for he had been down my area and tasted of my legs of mutton—the monster of ingratitude was fond of the knuckle; when my tree shed its leaves and littered the garden with its sere and yellow foliage, which rotted in the rain, and exhaled noxious vapours, I had thought of laying the axe at its roots. When my door required a new patent lock that cost eighteen shillings, I had no longer any satisfaction in being its sole proprietor; when my roof began to have a tile off regularly every month, my love turned to loathing. As to drawing cheques, there are people who say that getting a cheque out of me is like getting blood out of a stone. I have found that the Queen's taxes in the aggregate are by no means inconsiderable; that the rates are a burden not to be borne tamely. You should hear me at the ratepayers' meetings denouncing the vestry and the workhouse committee! And what is the last thing? They have abolished toll-gates in our parish, and assessed me at sixpence in the pound to pay for the roads. It is monstrous. Really, with such burdens and responsibilities, a respectable householder finds it difficult to make both ends meet. I have come to the conclusion that housekeeping is—“Please, sir, the drains is stopped up again, and the water is a standing a foot deep in the area!”

Oh dear, oh dear! Excuse me, will you, I must send for the plumbers at once.

TWO HOT DAYS IN ROME.

EVERYTHING told of heat and a raging Italian sun. People sat pale and exhausted at the shop doors, armed with paper whisks with which languidly to drive away the flies; little extempore fountains bubbled up on tiny tables spread with delicious pulpy lemons, and acque dolci (sweet drinks) cooled with fresh vine-leaves. Every woman and child we passed, of whatever degree, carried a fan which they used industriously; the very beggars shook their tin boxes in one hand, and fanned themselves with the other. All labours, trades, and occupations were done in the streets, which, never wide at any time, were now almost choked up. Shoemakers were making shoes, tailors cross-legged on tables squeezed into their house-walls, women cutting and stitching on low stools, surrounded by their gipsy-eyed progeny, girls combing each other's hair (often a severe test of friendship in hot weather), men walking under the eaves with their hats in their hands, all pale, worn, exhausted. The three-legged tables outside the cafés were crowded with sleepy or sleeping men, lounging

on benches, the scarcely awake indulging in ices or drinks, the sleepers in the strangest attitudes—for an Italian could sleep, I believe, on one leg, if he tried. It being about noon, the street kitchens were in active operation—fish, fresh and foul, hissing and broiling over pans of charcoal, stands of fruit, apricots, figs, and cherries, ripe and ready to drop into one's mouth.

When we reached the English quarter, the Piazza di Spagna, great was the emptiness and the desolation; the windows in the hotels hermetically sealed and the doors shut. Piale's a wilderness, not a soul to be seen; the long flight of the Trinita steps scorching and vacant, the little fountains at its base bubbling in an utter solitude. No groups of peasants lounging (*en tableaux*). The man who does the venerable father with long beard and patriarchal garments, a special rascal, and the young man with the high-art features, who does the saints and apostles with a glory round his head; the beauty peasant with yards of white drapery folded over her glossy braids, under which glowed the impudent glancing eyes, coral beads, and gold necklace—all gone, driven out by the heat. Gone, too, was that dear little boy who sat for an angel when he was not stretching out his little dimpled hand, asking, like Oliver, for “more,” and his father, clad in sheepskins, who, with slouch hat and ragged cloak, did the everlasting conspirator.

Such was Rome in the dog-days—no life, no carriages, no sound; like the enchanted city in the Arabian Nights, all lay sunk in slumber. We descended, as the polite French say, at the Palazzo M., where apartments had been secured; a noble residence, big enough to take up one side of a square, with salons so large that people looked dim and misty at the further end, and galleries and corridors, luxuriously mounted, overlooking charming gardens with fountains. That very evening St. Peter's was to be illuminated; so, after fortifying ourselves with an excellent dinner, sent in piping hot from a neighbouring trattoria in a tin box, and further recruiting ourselves by draughts of refreshing orvieto out of wicker bottles, we attained that contented and happy state of mind proper to the eve of a great festa. Evening, delicious, balmy evening had come; the breeze swept through the streets, and the stars peeped out as we started together with hundreds and thousands of the Pope's undutiful subjects for St. Peter's. On these grand occasions the Ponti S. Angelo is closed to the vulgar, who are obliged to pass over the Tiber into the Trastevere. Plunging into the narrow streets at the entrance of this region, the home of Raphael's Fornarina was pointed out to me. It is a small two-windowed house, the lower portion used as a magazine of herbs—Anglicè, the greengrocery business. While our carriage is slowly advancing through the labyrinths of streets, every now and then stopped by the carabinieri (here acting as policemen) rushing upon us with drawn swords, I will tell my readers the real story of Raphael and the Fornarina.

When Raphael was painting his beautiful frescoes in the Farnesina palace, he passed daily over the bridge and through this narrow street to his work. One day, it is said, he saw a beautiful black-haired girl, of the voluptuous type painters love so well, bathing her white feet in the waters of the Tiber. From that hour all peace of mind forsook him, and he forgot even art in his earnest desire to be loved by so exquisite a creature. The baker's daughter, however, was already provided in the way of a lover, a certain fierce soldier, stained by the blood of many battles, aspiring to the possession of this peerless beauty. Egidio had no refinement of soul, no "intellect of love;" only the outward charms of the girl had touched him; but he swore that, if any one else presumed to think of or approach her, he would finish him with a stoccata. Catterinella, never having known the delicious frenzy of love, had hitherto submitted with a tolerable grace, arising from perfect indifference, to the advances of the soldier; he often came to her father's shop, and gossiped and smoked, until she grew used to him, and Egidio, in a manner, became domesticated. But when Raphael came also, and talked and cast amorous glances out of his beautiful eyes at Catterinella, she began to detest the soldier, and to feel all the joys and pains of first love. Raphael not only rapidly insinuated himself into her affections, but, with that amiability and grace which he so prominently possessed, fascinated even the rough baker himself. He was too much absorbed in his art to spend much time at the shop, but that very art afforded him the readiest means of advancing his suit. He asked Guiseppe to allow his daughter to sit to him for her picture, and he, though but a common vulgar tradesman, still had enough respect for the fine arts, then so generally cultivated in Rome, to consider the request as a compliment, and to comply. But he made Raphael promise never to mention his compliance, both out of regard to Catterinella's fair fame, and for fear of the rough soldier, Egidio, whose blind jealousy might prompt him to commit some violence. When Catterinella first went to Raphael's studio it was secretly and cautiously, and accompanied by her mother, but so frequent were the visits of Egidio, and so ardent his passion for Catterinella, that it was impossible for their absence not to raise his suspicions. One day when they had left the shop, as they supposed unobserved, he watched them at a distance, and, seeing them enter a doorway and ascend a staircase, followed them. The door was inadvertently left open, and Egidio entered, and, stealing noiselessly into the spacious studio, hid himself among some lumber. Unable to control his fierce passions at seeing Catterinella seated opposite Raphael, Egidio, drawing his stiletto, rushed on the painter, who, at that very instant poised his brush in the air, was intently and passionately examining the Fornarina's features. The women, horrified at the sudden apparition of Egidio, his drawn knife and horrid looks, screamed aloud; but

Raphael, unarmed as he was, rose and faced his assailant. No sooner had Egidio recognised Sanzio as the detested rival whom he was about to murder—Sanzio, whom he regarded as a deity, whom he had heard celebrated as the very wonder of the world—than he stood transfixed, and the stiletto dropped from his hand. A few inarticulate words of excuse and prayers for pardon fell from his lips. Tranquillised by the humane looks of Raphael, who gazed on him with a kind of pitying astonishment, he endeavoured, in broken words, to explain the motives which had induced this murderous conduct; he spoke of his love, he concealed not his jealousy. Determined at the moment and on the spot to know his fate, Egidio, deeply agitated, now turned towards the affrighted Catterinella, who, scared by his fierce looks of mingled hate, rage, and love, scarcely dared to raise her head, while, himself shaking with ill-suppressed passion, he implored her to be calm. He assured her he would not injure her, but he conjured her, by all she held most sacred, to tell him if she really loved him. Catterinella, inspired by the passionate excitement of the moment about to decide her fate, trembled no more. She forgot her fears of Egidio, his cruelty and his jealousy; she forgot all save Raphael—the sun under whose rays she had expanded into a new and delicious life—Raphael, the god of her idolatry, who stood pale and speechless before her. Raising her eyes to his face, she gave utterance to the love she had long secretly cherished in her heart, and, trembling, confessed in faltering accents that he was dear to her beyond all other mortals. Egidio was struck dumb when he heard his fate pronounced by the lips of her he loved. Seizing his knife, which had lain on the floor, he rushed from the studio. Relieved from the fascination of Raphael's countenance and majestic presence, Egidio, clasping his weapon in his hand, resolved to return and murder him; but when he remembered the words of Catterinella—when he recalled those passionate words in which she had confessed her love—his resolution again changed. "Why kill him, when she loves me not?" exclaimed he. Honour and despair strove in the breast of the savage soldier; love, hope, life—all had passed into the possession of another, and that other a man so godlike, that he could scarcely, even in the wild paroxysms of his jealousy, wonder at the preference. His violent nature could not endure the tortures of his soul, and, in utter despair, he plunged into his own breast the weapon he had raised against Sanzio.

As we turned into the Lungara every palace was illuminated with red light. The immense Corsini palace especially shone out brilliantly, and looked the very image of a magnificent feudal residence belonging to some mediæval baron. Lights glittered along its interminable façade, row above row to the very roof, while at intervals in the street were planted huge torches of burning pitch, that blazed and flashed and cast ruddy unearthly tints on the white palace behind, while great bonfires of tar-barrels,

poked up by groups of men with long poles, flared away on the ground, giving a barbaric grandeur to the façade. Immovable in the doorway stood the porter, bâton in hand, a portly mass of lace, badges, and cocked-hat, evidently convinced that the whole prosperity and dignity of the Corsini line consisted in his majestic deportment on so auspicious an occasion. A little crowding, some swearing, and great amount of butting from the carabinieri, who ride full tilt at man, horse, or carriage that offends them, and we were within the colonnade of St. Peter's, that noble colonnade now glittering with light, whose outstretched arms seemed to clasp in one embrace all the people assembled there from every Christian nation of the world. Never does St. Peter's look so beautiful as when illuminated; the magnificent building, with its encircling colonnades, its topmost cupola, its population of saints, and prophets, and angels, and apostles, crowding the roof, and the cross surmounting all, hung amid the very stars, all idealised, poetised, until it appears like a bright glittering vision. It is not in the power of words to convey any adequate notion of St. Peter's that night; each pillar, each arch in the mighty structure marked out by lines of mellowed light below, above, around, not massed in any one place, but gracefully following the lines and undulations of the vast fabric. No decoration in the world can be so chaste and appropriate as this under the soft, harmonious colouring of an Italian night. There is a solemn, sacred repose, a holy calm and stillness, that affects the mind with the most overwhelming emotions.

For a while we contemplated what is called the silver illumination, when the lights are veiled. Exactly one hour and a quarter after the first hour of night a cannon was fired from the fort of San Angelo. The harmonious bells of St. Peter's tolled out in response, and in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, streams of ruddy light glanced up from below among the colonnades, marking their elegant outlines, and revealing interminable vistas of mysterious gloom amid a thousand glittering columns. What had been pale subdued light, now blazed out in gorgeous flames of living fire, the great Basilica was enveloped in streams of quivering brightness, its gigantic front, white as alabaster, standing out with a strange, unnatural clearness in the glare of the garish illumination. Great vases of burning pitch, as if by enchantment, appeared suddenly to burst out between every column in the vast colonnade, every statue burned with a living light, that rose up and flared, as the wind caught the forked flames, like an universal conflagration; the cupola, specially, beautifully relieved by the dark sky behind, was a blaze of the most dazzling splendour, while above, surmounting all, the radiant cross shone with indescribable brilliancy, a brand as it were snatched from heaven. It was beautiful to see the fountains gushing forth in the general glare, to see the thousand lamps reflected in the pure waters that broke forth in liquid pillars to fall back an abundant foamy

mass of molten silver, cooling the air, and sending out clouds of delicious spray. The bells of the church broke forth in merry chimes, deep-toned and musical, a military band struck up in the piazza, and the cannons from San Angelo boomed distinctly above all the other sounds. The carriages now separate from the masses into which the carabinieri had formed them, and we drove round and round the immense piazza fully to enjoy and survey the scene.

Next morning, St. Peter's Day, we rose very early, to attend high mass at St. Peter's church, the ceremonies being precisely similar to those which take place at Easter, with this notable difference, that Romans, not English and Americans, form the congregation. Every one flocked to the all-embracing arms of that great piazza, and we soon fell into a long line of carriages slowly advancing towards the Basilica. Again we crossed the muddy Tiber, its volume much lessened by the summer heat. The houses and palaces bordering the river, always of a peculiarly mellow warm colouring, now looked baked with the fierce heat. Clouds of fine small dust rose in the light summer breeze. Altogether, it was a great relief to be again engulfed in the narrow shady streets of the Trastevere, after crossing this burning zone of sun. Every passage and cranny leading to St. Peter's was choked and overflowing with an ever-increasing multitude. They came in boats, they came in grand equipages, in humble baroccios, on foot,—on they came to worship at that magnificent shrine. I could not form one in this national procession towards Rome's great Basilica, without recalling the famous names of royal and saintly pilgrims that have consecrated the well-worn path along which we passed: the warlike Emperor Constantine, after the golden cross was revealed to him on the hill of Monte Mario; the great Theodosius, his successor, who came to beg a blessing at this shrine; and the brave Belisarius, who offered up his laurels there. That world-ravager, ferocious Totila, came also in a subdued and contrite spirit, and even Alaric, the so-called "Scourge of God," after laying waste the surrounding city, with noble inconsistency spared this glorious Basilica. Many, too, came from our own country. The Saxon Cedwella, and Offa, and Concred, kings all of the Heptarchy, and our own royal Alfred in his young days, taking, as it were, "the grand tour." Othos and Henrys from Germany flocked here from royal palace and burgh; and St. Cunigunda, the mediæval saint-queen, whose romantic story lends such a charm to many a native ode. Emperors also from the East, and kings from the far western shores of Scotland, also the great northern Caesar, Charlemagne, the type of Christian chivalry, four times visited St. Peter's, on the last occasion making such concessions to the Papal See, that the grateful Pope, Leo the Third, granted to him the style and title of "Most Pious, August, Pacific, and Victorious Emperor of the Romans"—designations somewhat anomalous and inconsistent, which might, however, be, perchance, willing

accepted, with all their discrepancy, by a certain emperor of our time. The great saints, too, must not be forgotten. Augustine and Chrysostom and Jerome, and many world-wide names who journeyed here to pray, to perform penance, to fulfil vows, or to receive honours.

Streams of people were spread over the piazza, and, mounting the steps, were engulfed by the great portals of that vast hall which never is full. We entered; the golden mellow light of morning subdued the too glaring details of the florid architecture. The church was in grand gala, the walls and pillars draped with red and gold, assimilating harmoniously with the brilliant coloured marbles and mosaics. The cupola, rising like a firmament in height and magnitude, shone in the slanting rays of the morning sun—the angels, saints, and prophets, emblazoned in bright colours on the golden frescoes. Beneath, the altar was spread with the costliest vessels of gold, chalices, cups, salvers, and crosses carved by the hands of Cellini or Bramanti, all radiant with sparkling jewels.

On either side were the enclosures prepared for the ladies, who came habited in black veils and dresses; but instead of the irreverent Easter crowd-rushing, and pushing, and laughing, and talking, as if entering an opera-house, the seats were thinly occupied by a sprinkling of ladies, whose devout looks showed that they came to pray and not to stare. The tribune behind the high altar was hung with crimson, and to the left stood a throne prepared for the Pope. Down the central aisle an avenue was formed by the civic guard and the quaint Swiss soldiers, along which his Holiness was to pass. We were scarcely settled, when a hush and a general motion of expectation announced that the Pope had arrived at the central door. Slowly and silently the magnificent procession passed up towards the tribune. First came the Swiss guards, and chamberlain in red silk. Then Pius, seated on the "gestorial" chair or throne, glittering with gold, purple, and crimson, wearing his triple crown, and habited in robes of white. Over him was borne a dais of crimson and gold, while beside him were carried two great fans of peacock's feathers, as typical of immortality. There is a look of Eastern magnificence about these fans extremely striking. The Pope, calm and majestic in his bearing, dispensed blessings as he passed with the air of one rapt in deep devotion. He was followed by the entire Sacred College, all aglow with crimson and guipure lace, a sight calculated to break any lady's heart on the score of misplaced finery. Chaplains, secretaries, and chamberlains (mere minnows to these ecclesiastical Tritons) fluttered in their rear, followed by files of the superbly-dressed Guardia Nobile, all picked men, tall, graceful, and handsome, disciplined in the encounters of social warfare and "carpet knighthood," now gorgeous in glistening helmets, short scarlet mantles, and a generally classic air, reminding one of Pollio in Norma, whose general line of conduct, as well as outward costume, they are said to emulate. The Pope was now seated on his throne, and the mass begun.

It is to my mind a fatal want in the otherwise noble ceremonial of the Papal mass at St. Peter's, that the music is entirely vocal, an organ being thought to be undignified in the Pope's presence. Part-singing, however perfect, is monotonous. The Pope's famous choir are invisible, caged like singing-birds in a golden latticed gallery. The Gregorian chant, which, although admirable as mediæval music, becomes wearisome after two hours' duration. The mass is long to exhaustion. The Pope stands, walks, and kneels, sometimes at his throne, sometimes at the altar, sometimes alone, and sometimes surrounded by the cardinals. One wonders how he can remember such meaningless changes, unless one happens to know there is an officer attached to the Papal court whose sole business it is to prompt him, and to keep him and the cardinals "well posted up" in their daily duties—what dresses to wear, what to "eat, drink, and avoid." Sometimes there is a pause, the music ceases, the Pope and cardinals sit enthroned (*Anglicè*, rest themselves), and the golden vessels are moved and removed on the high altar. During one of these pauses I looked round at the groups formed near the high altar (where the mere vulgar crowd is not allowed to penetrate), and wondered at the curiously mediæval aspect of the scene. Particoloured Swiss guards, red, yellow, and black, with steel caps and corselets, overlooked by officers in complete armour of polished steel inlaid with gold, some actually wearing graceful chain tunics over crimson velvet, with golden helmets, so that when two or three whispered together they instantly formed a picture for Maclise of Knights Palatine, or partisans of old Gotz von Berlichingen, or any other mediæval scene you please. Papal chamberlains, picturesque in high Elizabethan ruffs, doublets, chains and orders, long hose and rosetted shoes, regular Sir Walter Raleighs, and, like him, remnants of a century when Spain ruled European fashions as France does in our days. Priests breaking the mundane pageant here and there, and reminding one of the mass still proceeding (which, by reason of its length and pauses, seemed over long before it really was), in every kind, colour, and variety of gold-embroidered vestments. Officers of the civic guard in dark uniforms, and officers of Austria in white, diligently keeping back masses of Roman peasants gaudy as butterflies as to body and petticoat, and quite laden with chains and crosses, earring and flowers, gold, silver, and pearls, often wondrously handsome women. To these add the rows of black-veiled ladies sitting on either side in the reserved seats, backed by the many-coloured walls rich with mosaics, variegated marbles mounting aloft to the cupola, where, under a glare of light, the four gigantic evangelists in the spandrels of the arches float in a haze of golden sunshine, a glorious setting of a glorious scene.

Again we settled down to the mass, the Pope advanced to the altar, denuded of mitre and royal trappings, in a plain white dress, the music ceased, the attendant prelates retired, every knee was bent, every head bowed in

seeming devotion. Alone on the steps of the altar stood that venerable old man, his hands clasped over the elements, his eyes turned to heaven. While he communicated, the silence was positively awful. Then, stealing around, came the soft sounds of the silver trumpets, low and plaintive, at first, as wailing spirits, then swelling forth in a Hosanna of joy and praise. The Pope, holding in his hand the host, turned to the four quarters of the globe. Then the *Agnus Dei* was chanted, the Pope resumed his robes and retired as he came, bestowing blessings around. Then the crowd, ebbing and flowing like a human sea, cast its vast waves through every open door into the piazza beyond, where the burning sunshine caught and absorbed them all alike. We too, with these thousands of living victims, were ruthlessly clutched by the monster waiting to devour us the instant we left the kindly shelter of the cool sanctuary.

But the celebrations of Rome's great festa to her patron saint were not yet over. Magnificent pleasures were yet awaiting us in the Piazza del Popolo at the first hour of night. The piazza was densely filled. The fountains and obelisks rose out of acres of pleasure-loving Romans; galleries were erected in the porticos of the twin churches opposite the Flaminian Gate; every window was filled, and every eye turned in expectant eagerness towards the Pincian Hill, where, amid lofty terraces and sculptured trophies, gigantic statues and dark ilex woods, the *girandola* (fireworks) was to be exhibited. Meanwhile, the usual fanning and consuming of ices and of sweet drinks went on among the Roman princesses, seated on a raised estrade, looking as haughty and unpleasant as any classical Cornelias or Volumnias, history could furnish.

The herald cannon sounded, and up flew millions of rockets, descending in blue, red, purple, and yellow stars. When these brilliant comets allowed us to look round, the summit of the Pincian was transformed into a great temple of fire, enclosed by walls of quivering crystal, broken by niches filled with fiery statues; a temple such as Vulcan might have reared to Venus in the infernal shades wherein to recast the armour of Mars.

Then volleys of deafening cannon rattled till one's ears ached. Behold, overlapping streams of liquid fire rush down the steep sides of the Pincian into the piazza, and mysteriously disappear in showers of golden sparks, which the crowd struggled to catch; but lo! they were gone! Then we had an *intermezzo* of rockets and catherine-wheels, the cannons outdoing one another; and now a vast architectural design appears, representing a burning palace, great halls and galleries, and endless arcades and colonnades in fiery perspective, red with palpitating flames. Such a palace might have suited the ghosts in Vathek, which wander hither and thither for ever through boundless vaults of fire, clasping with their hands a burning heart hid under the folds of shadowy draperies.

I could not tell all the wonderful tricks and changes of these marvellous fireworks; the en-

chanter Merlin never terrified his enemies with more surprising samples of his transforming art. As a final triumph, the whole Pincian became the crater of a horrible volcano, casting forth fire and flames, while the roar of the cannon mimicked the thunders of the labouring mountains. Red lava-streams rushed down in every direction, and millions of rockets shot up into the heavens, to fall back bright and beaming like planets fallen from their spheres.

A moment more and all was over. The moon shone down serenely in a soft twilight, casting pale lights on the statues and terraced galleries, as if all else had been a disordered dream.

ANOTHER GUN.

Nor long ago was noticed in this journal the idea of the ingenious inventor who, in the wild competition of all the iron and steel guns—iron which was homogeneous and malleable; and steel which was “Krupp’s”—modestly proposed a new material, which took the world a little by surprise, namely, leather and papier-mâché.* There is a great deal to be said for the leather and paper guns; certainly something on the score of economy. The parliamentary bills for the artillery furnished by Whitworth and Armstrong are swelling every year, and making the ratepayer scowl. More beautiful tools in finish, design, and workmanship, could not be conceived. A small Armstrong would not discredit a drawing-room or a boudoir; and the enthusiasm of the French officer, who exclaimed, with military rapture, that they exhibited a “*luxe et un puissance d’outillage merveilleux*,” can be almost comprehended on looking at them. But the ratepayer’s admiration is damped when he thinks of the frightful cost of the experiments, the workshops, the failures, the inventors, the metals, the tools. A cost that, in the words of the famous “power of the Crown” resolution, is increasing, hath increased, and very decidedly ought to be diminished. When a reformer, therefore, comes forward with a simple practical plan which has economy written in mammoth characters on its outside, he deserves to be listened to with respect. MAJOR PALISER, a young cavalry officer, who, unlike most of his military companions, made a brilliant university career—has for some years been experimenting, and has now secured the great dull flabby government ear, and, better still, is “getting” the honest, open, friendly ear of the public.

The recommendation of the whole is its welcome simplicity and economy. It is not known, perhaps, that a gun, like a bank-note, has its fixed length of days. It is allowed to live through so many discharges, a register of which is kept. When the number is filled up, say, in many cases, from eighty to a hundred (this was under the old pre-Armstrong dispensation), government steps in. The “arm” is assumed to be unsafe.

* Volume xii., page 162.

The war-officer condemns and casts out. But Major Palliser steps in, scoops out the interior, re-lines it, and makes it—not as “good as new,” but literally far better than new. All, too, for a sum ridiculously low. At home in store, in dock-yards, on old towers and fortifications, up and down here and there through the kingdom, out in the colonies, in ships and in cellars, even on the terraces of noblemen’s castles who wish to have a little cheap military show, and hold these old “pieces” in trust for the War Office, are tens of thousands of this old ordnance, of all sizes and dimensions. Every day, the list is being swelled; for, every day salutes and reviews are putting a term to the services of many of the monsters. The question arises, should not these be considered rather as damaged than worn out, which, in fact, three-fourths only are—a damage that literally a pound or two can repair.

One of the old vulgar errors—and it is a vulgar error still with many—was, that thickness was strength. You made an enormously thick cannon, and you had, therefore, an enormously strong cannon. Experiment has now discovered, first, that the shock produced by a discharge acts chiefly at or about the breech, and that, therefore, immoderate thickness is only thrown away in other portions; secondly, that the shock will only travel through a certain thickness, and that, after that, the disturbance is not felt. The waves of disturbance, in fact, do not go through the iron beyond a certain distance. But there is something more to be considered to understand this new plan. We hear the words “cast-iron,” “homogeneous iron,” “malleable iron,” &c., used abundantly, which convey very confused ideas. All the old artillery we see lying in the forts were made of “cast-iron”—perhaps the worst known iron in the world. That is, a heap of iron was melted with all its dross and impurities, and then “run” in a sand mould. As the gun cooled unequally—the outer surface, next the air, before the inner, and both very suddenly as compared with the interior texture—sometimes this interior, between the outside and inner layers, never solidified at all, and has been found to be quite soft and pulpy. A greater danger still is what is called “honey-combs,” when the bubbles get imprisoned in the cooling guns, with the result of a series of hollow cells between the outer and inner surfaces. So that the gun is, in reality, but (say) one-third as thick as it appears to be. Again, cast-iron is full of impurities, is unequal in quality and in density. But there is a greater and almost a certain danger. If there be—what there is sure to be—a flaw—a crack even the width of a human nail—this is the foundation of destruction. The powder gases act as a lever, and at every discharge widen this little crack, until in the end it bursts the piece itself. This fatal crack cannot be guarded against, and on all grounds, therefore, cast-iron is undesirable.

Major Palliser, however, collects these old and condemned arms, places them in a turning machine, and scoops away an inch thickness of the interior metal, introducing a small tube or

lining, which is screwed in, and formed of several tubes of wrought-iron or steel fitted on each other according to his principle.

The great danger, however, is from what are called “sets.” Up to a certain point the iron is “elastic” under an explosion: that is, expands, and contracts again to its original state. The limit to this elasticity stands at about four tons on the square inch. The gun will bear a great deal more, perhaps up to ten tons, without bursting; but, once the strain has gone beyond the limit of elasticity, the economy of the metal becomes disturbed, and what is called a “set” takes place. The whole texture of the gun has been strained, and its strength really reduced. By this new plan of Major Palliser’s, a sort of artificial texture is built up. The inner core introduced is formed of a material whose power of elasticity is nearly three times that of cast-iron. This new lining takes all the practical strain and duty on itself: the old cast-iron shell takes its share, and is well able to bear the shock that reaches it, and at least the longitudinal pressure.

What, then, is this valuable “homogeneous” or “Krupp” iron which enjoys such a reputation? It is simply well-made wrought-iron—iron made very dense. It is the most wrought of wrought-iron. Krupp hammers the metal into a quantity of little ingots, which are beaten into the densest shape. These little ingots are only the materials for making the iron, and by means of steam hammers these are welded into masses of iron. The hammering, in short, is so “thorough,” that all chance of cracks, flaws, or “honey-combs” becomes next to impossible. The more wholesale and effectual the hammering, the “closer” and more superior the metal. This is the secret of the Krupp iron. But by this process the result is so extraordinary that a new metal seems to have been created. The power of resistance is almost amazing, and Mr. Whitworth is actually said to have plugged one of his musket-barrels made of this material, and to have fired it off without bursting the piece. As may be conceived, it is costly. Major Palliser would merely use a lining—and it is on the lining, and only at the breech portion of the lining, that the great pressure acts—and would trust to the old cast-iron for the balance of resistance.

This interior lining might be made of several tubes. They should not be shrunk over each other, as Mr. Whitworth does his, by hydraulic pressure. For, by the “shrinking,” the inner tube is compressed and tightened more than it ought to be, and, when the shock comes, will assist in straining the one over it. Major Palliser would make his innermost layer of very soft and elastic iron, the next of a harder sort, the next of steel, and the outside one of the old cast-iron cannon itself.

This officer’s name has become associated with two other curious discoveries. One is so simple a thing as the method of tracing the threads of a screw to be used in targets, with astonishing results—raising them on the surface instead

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of depressing them. The other is the making of shells out of "chilled iron," which is an iron as hard and brittle as steel, but with this difference, that what cost ten shillings may be had for two. These economies, when we are firing away half millions and millions every year with blaze and thunder, are worthy of every consideration. We have had surely enough of costly inventions, and yet more costly experiments, in the direction of targets, rams, iron platings, shells, and the rest of it, and we seem very little nearer a satisfactory termination. The only discovery that we have been helped to, is the simple one of the homogeneous iron, which is yet no discovery, and which common sense saw for itself long ago. Unless flour is well blended, or dough well kneaded with the familiar rolling-pin, we shall have but indifferent bread and pastry. The great Nasmyth steam hammers are the rolling-pins of the foundry. The Armstrong "welded coil" is the old twisted rifle barrel over again. The Palliser gun in all this chaos is clear and intelligible. It is a resting-place in the bewildering mystery of experiment and speculation. It is a certainty, and a cheap certainty. Will it be believed that there is "sunk" in these cast-iron guns lying useless all over the empire a capital of MANY MILLIONS, and that within a period of only four years a sum of nearly A MILLION AND A QUARTER was laid out on these useless engines, which are little more enduring than fireworks?

GERMAN OPERA AND ITS MAKERS.

IN THREE CHAPTERS. CHAPTER I.

THERE is no section of art, in which Fashion—foolish insensate Fashion—has ruled the hour more completely, than in that of theatrical music. A hundred years ago our Walpoles and Grays, gentlemen who had taken "the grand tour," and professed connoisseurship in Art, were sneering at Handel, as an old worn-out creature crutched up on court influence, merely because Handel lived in England—ignoring Gluck—dying the while of ecstasy over some mediocre Italian opera imported from abroad, written by a man whose name lives only in the pages of a dictionary. But in the time of Walpole and Gray, the real culture of, and taste for music in England,—which had been all but destroyed by political convulsions, and afterwards dwarfed and flouted, by a set of brave spirits, who thought the sounds of their tongues in the coffee-houses were sweeter than any "Ausonian Melody"—were at a very low ebb.

The narrowness of our sympathies is illustrated by our utter indifference to all stage music such as France could produce. Nay, we are now only reluctantly waking up to the fact, that to the Grand Opéra of Paris, shaped in rigorous conformity to the taste of our neighbours, all Europe has been greatly indebted for the formation of dramatic as distinguished from musical opera. The largest and most deeply based stone in the foundation of the edifice

was laid by Lulli—an Italian it is true, as were, after him, Piccini, Sacchini, Cherubini, Spontini, Rossini—but who was compelled from the first, possibly by the comparatively uncultivated state of the art of singing in France, more largely to study declamatory passion and scenic fitness, than that melody which amuses the ear; but which if produced in exaggerated forms and proportions, ends in abusing the sense of probability. This subject, however, of French opera is too large a one to be dismissed in a paragraph, though we must advert to it, as illustrating the prejudice which so curiously *veins* English connoisseurship, in counterbalance to an occasional fearlessness in recognition, such as no other country can lay claim to. Suffice it to state, that our admission of any school, and a style, as distinguishing the country of "our born enemies," dates within the last quarter of a century. Yet, as could be proved, French opera, with its own style and school, was something like a century older than German opera with *its* style and school only in embryo. It is curious to observe how, with admiration sometimes indiscriminating, and sympathy not seldom blind, the tide of English enthusiasm, especially among those who professed to be scientific and profound, began, so soon as it took any cognisance of the matter, to admire everything bearing a German signature. We had been enthralled by Bürger—we were melted by Werther. The fashion for German music spread like wildfire: as irrationally as the fashion before it which had deified the Farinellis and Senesinos, and had made serious quarrels over the rivalry between Cuzzoni and Faustina on the Italian stage.

The time may have come to look at these things a little more dispassionately—to arrange the three schools of opera in Europe in their right places, without unfair antagonism or robbery of the just dues of any. For the moment let us deal with Opera in Germany, and by way of beginning let us look back for a moment, at what really was achieved in that country before Mozart's time.

The courts of the different kingdoms, from north to south, had Italian companies and Italian traditions from an early period of opera. At Hamburg, there was something more individual—the Hanse Town showing clearly how the burgher and the merchant, even in a state of undeveloped freedom, coarse luxury, and semi-civilisation, could dare and do more than King or Kaiser, in the fostering of national originality. The Hamburg opera is illustrated by three successive names as famous as those of Keyser, Mattheson, and—HANDEL. The first kept the stage of Hamburg for forty years—from his "Basilus" in 1694, till his "Circe" in 1734, enriching the theatre with one hundred productions. Where are these now? Dr. Burney accredits the high praise bestowed on him by Faustina's husband "Il Sassone" Hasse;—and somewhat incoherently accredits him "with novelty of passages, with an absence of grace and facility, with modulation, ingenuity, and

new ideas, with the vigour of a fertile invention, and correctness of study and experience." Nothing is so difficult to describe in words, as music—even if the hand that holds the pen be as neat, and the head as clear, as were Burney's; but the above praise reminds us of "hot ice and wondrous strange snow;"—and it may be not uncharitably surmised, that if Keyser had exhibited any real style of his own, we should not have to inquire for some specimen of the music of these hundred forgotten operas. A song for Medusa, from the "Persee" of Lulli, electrified our London concert-rooms, public and private, within the last ten years, by its declamatory grandeur, which offered scope to the singer living who is grandest in declamation—Madame Viardot.

In Keyser's day, however, the lines of demarcation, so far as dramatic music was concerned, betwixt Germany and Italy, were as yet but indistinctly drawn. Most, if not all, of the operas produced—as, for instance, the "Costanza e Fortezza" of Fux, the third performance of which at Prague was conducted from the harpsichord by no less august an amateur than the Emperor Charles the Sixth of Austria—were written to Italian text. There was one great original German thinker, it is true, rising up and pouring out noble thoughts and new combinations, of a variety and value of which we have only become duly sensible during late years—Sebastian Bach—but, magnificent as his instrumental works are, his dealings with the single voice are so curiously ignorant, and, it may be said, thoughtless (a rebuke strange as applied to the King of organists)—as to excite surprise rather than to establish a style. Superb as are the choruses in Bach's sacred works—witness the Thunder Chorus in his Passion-Music according to St. Matthew—witness the "Crucifixus" to his mass in B minor—witness the opening to his "Magnificat"—startling as are certain of his recitatives by their dramatic intensity—the majority of his songs are tedious, over ornate, and written on a totally wrong principle. The singer was to exhibit in dialogue with some instrument or instruments brought into a relief quite as high as the vocal strain: and the air was too often forced pell-mell into a union with words nothing short of Mezentian. In truth, the good man shifted his songs about, from work sacred to work profane, with a callous indifference which would now call down the bitterest German irony (as controversy has been of late) were it found in an Italian composer. It is notorious, however, that Bach (no bigot, like many a meaner creature among his successors) had a hankering after Opera. By way of a holiday he would go from Leipzig to Dresden "to hear the pretty songs." As he tried his hand at everything, he may be said to have made a move towards Opera in that gruff, quaint Cantata "Pan and Phœbus," which was the other day disinterred for the first time in the splendid modern German edition of his works. But the music of this, though not without inklings of humour, is, as a whole, dry, and without significance. Compare it, for in-

stance, with the dramatic efforts of one, far less deeply learned, less favourably circumstanced—so melodious, so impassioned—so close in the expression of situation and sense by sound, and (some slight flavour of Lulli allowed for) so unmistakably English in their nationality—of our Purcell.

The mighty musical spirit of Bach, however, had no, immediate influence on the creation of what may be generically called German opera: nor indeed, was it felt in the branch of art in which he was autocrat for a good half century after his decease. The men of genius, with some small exception, denationalised themselves. Handel passed into Italy, there to lay hands on whatever suited him;—thieving on a magnificent scale from Clari, Colonna, Scarlatti, Erba, and Heaven knows how many less famous men. Nor was Gluck a whit more German in style. After writing some scores of Italian operas, according to the southern pattern, he suddenly struck into his own path in his "Orfeo," a path not unmarked with concessions and conventionalisms—though those who use him as a party-cry will not have it so. His visit to our despised London, where he was brought into rivalry with Handel (his "Caduta dei Giganti" having been written, as was "Judas Maccabeus," to celebrate the Culloeden victory over the Pretender), may have been the turning-point of his career:—and the antipathy of the two men, if antipathy there was (as the lovers of ill-natured anecdote stir themselves to prove), may not have hindered the dramatic composer—immature in originality though mature in years—from availing himself of the examples set him by the oratorio writer then in the zenith of his fame. The choruses in "Orfeo" and "Alceste," both operas written to Italian text, and some of their themes based on Italian melody, may owe something to such specimens of Handel's genius as "For Sion lamentation make," and "Fallen is the foe." Both the two mighty men gained their fame by pleasing other than German publics. Neither found for years on years due recognition at home. Handel, even to this day, has it not. It was from Paris, rather than Vienna, that Gluck's genius went forth to heaven, to remodel, and to recommend the grace of truth as superior to that of convention in musical drama.

If we look into the long list of German composers celebrated in their time, and now forgotten, who preceded Mozart, we find but one name connected with operas to be heard of at the time present. It is true that John Adam Hiller made a certain mark at Dresden by fourteen operas written to German text, and possibly containing "the pretty songs" which Father Bach loved to indulge himself with;—but of Hiller's music not a trace remains; and that it had no peculiar nationality of style may be divined from his favourite predilection, that of hearing the Italian operas of Hasse, "Il Sassone," German by birth, southern in style, and sung by a company of Italians, which included artists no less famous than Carestini and

Amorevoli. Hiller would sit up all night to copy Hasse's scores. Probably he was the best singing-master Germany ever produced, from having imbibed Italian traditions; certain it is, that he formed the greatest German singer of whom history makes mention—Mara. His compositions, however, have perished utterly; it may be owing to their want of style. A few years later than Hiller, was born that fertile, versatile, and ingenious musician, Ditters, who figures in musical dictionaries as Ditters von Dittersdorff, and whose "Doctor and Apothecary," and "Little Red Riding Hood," still appear in the theatres of Germany from time to time. Born at Vienna in 1739, Ditters entered his musical career as a violinist, and by a solo which he played in a church service, attracted the notice of the Prince of Hildburghausen, who took charge of his musical education. When this was complete, young Ditters entered the opera orchestra at Vienna, and there was fortunate enough to gain the favour of Metastasio and of Gluck; who, it is worth noting, by way of assisting the career of a German musician, took him into Italy. There, too, Ditters had the good luck, or good talent, rather, to make himself friends. One day, after playing his best, he was surprised by an anonymous letter of compliments and thanks;—and, what was better, a very rich watch. They came, he afterwards learned, from the princely soprano, Farinelli. Later, again, we find Ditters passing through the hands of Joseph Haydn, probably the best master of composition among the great composers who ever existed: seeing that, for the most part, poets can do little in the way of teaching the art of poetry.

The first essays of Ditters in composition were anything but comical, four stout oratorios written for the Bishop of Grosswardein, in Hungary—Isaac, David, Job, and Esther. It is evident, from these, that he was more solid and dreamy than one of those light-hearted and slightly-read Italians who, in their day, made such capital musical buffoonery,—and, further, the list of his compositions (many of which were written to Italian words) includes an Ossianic song, also fifteen grand symphonies on the subject of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*—a foreshadowing of the romantic and transcendental productions in which Germany has since proved so rich. He could also write criticisms and essays, and left behind him memoirs of his life, which are said to be amusing. But his industry, his popularity, and his patronage, could not save him. He quarrelled with his great friends—conceived himself elbowed out of his place by the success of Mozart, fell sick and into want, and died under the roof of a charitable Bohemian baron, soured and worn out. What I know of the music of Von Dittersdorff, however, has never seemed to me comic, so much as slight and neatly made. In truth, the element of fun, among our cousins German, seems spare and rare, as compared with the farce of Italy and the wit of France, especially in music. In his operas, Mozart only displays it in the part of Osmin in "Die Entführung" ("the Seraglio"),

and in the bird man and woman in "Die Zauberflöte"—whimsical as Mozart could be in his catches and chamber music. It would be hard to name a national German play which we English could accept as comedy of more modern date than Kotzebue's time. That writer had in him the true spirit of mirth and satire, besides great fertility of invention. But Kotzebue's is a name from which every earnest intense German patriot turns with aversion. To go back to music—the pieces found delightful in the popular theatres of licentious, laughing, vacant Vienna, even those with tunes composed and selected for them by Wenzel Müller, are dead and dreary as compared with the contemporary vaudevilles of France. If there be anything beyond mere theory spinning in the above speculation, Von Dittersdorff is better characterised as a son of the soil by his mystical Ovid symphonies than by the correct yet colourless music of his little comedies—the precursors of the yet milder mirth of Conradin Kreutzer and Lortzing.

One of the few genuine bits of German musical stage fun that could be named, and one of the most genuine in being, is the Pedlar's song in Mendelssohn's operetta, known in England as "Son and Stranger." But *he* was full of real merriment, perhaps in part, because he had Italian blood in his veins. It was among his many unfulfilled plans, cut short by early death, to write an opera based on Shakespeare's *Winter's Tale*; and, in a letter on the subject which exists, besides due regard to the interests of *Hermione* and *Perdita*, an anxious wish is expressed that *Autolycus* shall be well seen after.

Here chronological boundaries have been broken, in order completely to trace as among outlines the small amount of indigenous gaiety to be found in German opera music, from the moment at least when it began to take a special place of its own, and to cease from having what may be called a cosmopolitan existence, largely tinted by Italian and French inspirations. From that moment, a disposition to be thoughtful, sentimental, dreamy, began to make itself increasingly felt, pertinently aided by the development of another expressive power than that of the voice—to wit, the orchestra—in support of the singer and in suggestion of the situation.

The birth of this may be seen in the experiments and combinations of Sebastian Bach, curious in the extent of their complication and variety, entirely in advance of their time in their difficulty, yet now largely obsolete, because of the changes in the facture of instruments. Many of those Bach employed are superseded by modern inventions and improvements—and only exist in museums; some, as the trumpets, are matters of antiquarian dispute. There is nothing analogous in point of science or intricacy in contemporary French or Italian instrumental music. On the other hand, we have seen that Bach was not above being pleased with "the pretty Dresden songs." He was willing to appropriate the best things of every style, as a real, royal man of genius will do. French in-

fluence may be traced in some of his clavier music—in his gavottes and bourrées. Be these things as they may, though many of the works of Bach (the more fancifully inventive ones especially) never got hold of the public during his time, it is not too much to predicate that they were known to some of the best men in Germany, and that, wherever they were known, they quickened life and enterprise.

Eighteen years before Sebastian Bach died, there was born, in 1738, on the borders of Germany and Hungary, one of the completest musicians and men of genius that ever existed; whose influence on the direction of German music was perhaps wider—certainly more instantaneous—than that of the great organist. This was Joseph Haydn. A discriminating life of this remarkable man is eminently wanted, those by Framery, and Breton, and Carpani not filling the want. A more noticeable example of fertility without carelessness, of fancy without extravagance or conceit, of science without pedantry, of success acknowledged by a ceaseless resolution to make progress, does not exist in the annals of art. Eight hundred owned works were produced during his life of seventy-seven years; one of these works, including one hundred and fifty pieces for the baryton! thrown off as a part of his daily service, while he was Prince Esterhazy's retainer. Haydn mastered every style, he appropriated every discovery; he wrought incessantly, one might say mechanically, did not the charming freshness of his first ideas forbid the use of the word. Beginning modestly (though his earliest works are beautiful for their clearness and symmetry), he advanced till the end of life in width of scale, vigour of grasp, and freedom of style year by year, without sacrifice of his excellent originality. His "Creation," the work of two years, after he was sixty, was the fruit of a visit to England, produced in emulation of Handel. The last of his eighty-three stringed quartets, may be said to have been prompted by the advance which Mozart had made in that style of composition. His melodies were, till his death, fresh, his harmonies courageous, though not equalling in daring those of Sebastian Bach, his contrivances were at once natural and unexpected. And thus the great body of his music can only be said to be obsolete, in so much as simplicity is obsolete. As compared with the music of every other German composer, Beethoven excepted, it is astonishingly clear of mannerism.

What Haydn may be said to have done directly for German opera is easily told. Of the eleven German operas he wrote (some for the Prince Esterhazy's puppet theatre) we know nothing. There was incidental music, too, for the drama "Götz von Berlichingen," Goethe's early work, which, it may be remembered, was to Sir Walter Scott's genius what the spark is to the tinder. One would gladly know what this

was like. Then there were twelve Italian operas, principally, to judge from their titles, of mixed character, though including an "Armida," an "Acis and Galatea," an "Orlando Paladino," and an "Orfeo" begun for London, not completed. Of all this mass of music, one song, "Il pensier," from "Orfeo," survives. The bulk of Haydn's compositions do not give indications of that power over intense emotion demanded from one who is to treat serious themes for the stage. And yet his Cantata "Ariadne in Naxos"—his Spirit Song to the English words of that dashing lady but happy writer for music, Mrs. John Hunter,—and, most of all, his admirable setting of Shakespeare's "She never told her love,"—prove that he could have been as much at ease in the depths, or among the stormy waves, or on the melancholy shore, as in calm water and sunshine, had not the last better suited as themes his cheerful equable nature. One great requisite for vocal composition Haydn possessed in perfection. He was a singer; and had been renowned, when a choir boy, for the beauty of his voice.

Only one, however, of the facts and characteristics here assembled, may be said to have had anything to do with the special existence into which German opera began to mould itself during the last years of Haydn's life. This was his mastery over instrumental form and structure. With more real cheerfulness, he had less quaintness in his composition than Sebastian Bach—was therefore less urged to try new conclusions without any reference to their practicability or effect. It may be, that owing to the superior opportunities afforded him of hearing his music played (since a household band was at his disposition in the Esterhazy establishment), he approached that proportion in balance of forces, and in grouping the stringed and wind instruments, which was of infinitely greater value as a discovery than the most intricate assemblage of heterogeneous ingredients, to each of which was allowed its independent action, such as makes so many of Bach's works curiosities of combination. In brief, Haydn brought the orchestra many steps nearer its modern state and supremacy than it had ever been before;—making it an organ of separate expression, not merely of formal parade or subservient accompaniment; an engine for the production of effects as fascinating as they were new. Germany thenceforward shot ahead of Italy and France.

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